Montenegro's NATO Membership

Regional and International Implications

Predrag Jureković and Benedikt Hensellek (Eds.)

Study Group Information

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**33rd Workshop of the PfP Consortium Study Group
"Regional Stability in South East Europe"**

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Foreword

Predrag Jureković and Benedikt Hensellek

The 33rd workshop of the Study Group Regional Stability in South East Europe was convened in Budva, Montenegro from 22 to 24 September 2016. Under the overarching title of "Montenegro's Upcoming NATO Membership – Internal, Regional and International Implications" 30 experts from the South East European region and other parts of Europe, the US, international organizations and major stake holder nations met under the umbrella of the PfP Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes and the Austrian Ministry of Defence and Sports, represented through its National Defence Academy and the Directorate General for Security Policy. The workshop was supported by the regional partner organization, the Atlantic Council of Montenegro.

Soon after gaining independence in June 2006, Montenegro decided to take the Euro-Atlantic path. Thus, integration into NATO and the EU became two strategic foreign policy goals of this Adriatic and Western Balkan country. By following this strategic orientation, Montenegro has been in company of most of the Western Balkan neighbours, with the exception of Serbia that decided to become a member of the EU but to remain military neutral and by this outside the NATO. The followers of NATO integration in the Western Balkan countries argue that the process of becoming members of the same cooperative Western institutions will facilitate the complex processes of regional consolidation in this post war region. On the other hand, the process of Euro-Atlantic integration in the Western Balkans overlaps with an increasing geopolitical rivalry in this region – that has evoked political resistance of Russia toward further Western integration steps – and with the rise of global insecurity.

Despite its heavy intra-state disputes on the issue of NATO membership and Russia's political resistance, Montenegro's government completed the NATO accession process in June 2017 by entering this organization as the 29th member state. This had been preceded by Montenegro's accession to the NATO Partnership for Peace Programme (December 2006) and exten-

sive membership preparations through implementing NATO's Membership Action Plan (December 2009 – December 2015).

The following pages render the presentations and discussion that were provided at the workshop in Budva. They circle around the following questions:

- How will Montenegro's accession to NATO influence both its internal stability and the stability and security of the region?
- What is the impact of the Euro-Atlantic integration processes on intra-regional co-operation?
- To what extent do geopolitical trends and global security processes influence intra-regional security developments in the Western Balkans?

The editors would like to express their thanks to all authors who contributed papers to this volume of the Study Group Information. They are pleased to present the valued readers the analyses and recommendations of the Budva meeting and would appreciate if this Study Group Information could contribute to generate positive ideas for supporting the still challenging processes of consolidating peace in South East Europe.

Special thanks go to Ms. Lorena Mikl who supported this publication as facilitating editor.

Abstract

By joining NATO as the 29th member state in June 2017, the Adriatic and Western Balkan country Montenegro, 11 years after gaining its state independence, achieved one of its two strategic foreign policy goals. The successful closure of Montenegro's NATO accession process was accompanied by strong intra-state disputes that continue after the finalization of the membership process. It occurred at a time of increasing global security challenges. Even though most of Montenegro's Western Balkan neighbours appreciate NATO's further enlargement to South East Europe and recognize more opportunities for security cooperation inside this region that is still affected by the legacy of the 1990s wars, geopolitical rivalries that are also being reflected in the Western Balkans could impede positive developments.

PART I:

**INTRAREGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION –
CHANCES AND IMPEDIMENTS**

NATO Does Not Have a Realistic Alternative

Selmo Cikotić

Interaction of Levels of Global and Regional Security

Modern security environments, analysed at any level, demand some kind of global consideration and understanding. Security cooperation of the Western Balkans, therefore, is characterized by some globally relevant features: interdependence, increasing speed of change and the growing impact of technology. These three points are discussed in more detail below.

Interdependence – globalization brought a number of advantages to mankind (free flow of people, ideas, values, goods, technologies, communication, and others) and, simultaneously, made many security threats and risks global, challenging the security of every modern state and making every state more vulnerable and unable to meet security threats on its own. Therefore, interdependence has become a major feature of international relations and international security. But interdependence is an arrangement of independent actors, of states independently capable of coping with most threats, and not states that are dependent on somebody else's security capabilities and measures.

Increasing speed of overall change – the pace of overall changes, globally and locally, is constantly accelerating without any sign of slowing down. Quite the opposite is true. There are a number of indicators that this speed will continue to grow, and the expected acceleration mode is not defined by a linear but rather by an exponential curve. This increasing speed of change is relevant for individuals, for states and for mankind as a whole. It is relevant for security and defense, for politics and economy, for sports and technology, culture and education and all other areas of human endeavors.

Growing impact of technology – recently, technologies have expanded, offering untold benefits to humanity, but also posing multiple challenges such as increasing inequality, raising new ethical questions, and confronting us with unprecedented security and existential risks. This paper identifies

some of the disruptive technologies today. Artificial intelligence with various applications for combat purposes and all kinds of land, sea, air and space weapons are constantly progressing. Cyber technology creating the fifth dimension of war is becoming part of almost every other security threat or challenge and has brought about a new security environment. During 2010, the number of all devices connected to the network surpassed the number of people living on our planet, making the world not only a physical and geographical but also a virtual and networked entity.

The Western Balkans Specifics

There exist other significant features of the unpredictable, interdependent and fast changing world that are globally relevant and, at the same time, relevant for the Western Balkans as well.

On the other hand, there are some specifics of globalization that are present at the level of the Western Balkans, probably more than anywhere else in the world. Let me mention a few of them:

The transition from the Cold War era towards a new world order and globalization has not had so dramatic and so bloody a face as it had in some Western Balkan states, Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular. The human cost of killed, wounded, traumatized and displaced persons is so high that it is comparable with the most tragic moments of human history.

The influence of history here is very strong. Manipulations with history generally happen more often than manipulation with any other science. Manipulations with history in Western Balkans' small states are bigger – at the level of frequency and magnitude – than in most other parts of the world. Winston Churchill used to argue that the Balkans always produce more history than they are capable of consuming.

The Western Balkan has a specific geopolitical, geoeconomics and geocultural position. It is a link between Occident and Orient, it is a meeting place of civilizations, cultures and religions throughout history, it is a battlefield of many clashes and wars of empires of different times and it continues to be a field of interest to anyone willing to have influence – both regionally and globally.

The latest war that was waged between 1991 and 1995 was to a large extent not finished on the battlefield but at the negotiating table, which as a result of the unfinished war created a fragile and illogical peace, which sometimes requires arbitration and mitigation of the international community. The presence of the United States and European Union, as embodiments of the international community, is shrinking, which makes the peace and stability of the Western Balkans more vulnerable. The unfinished war and incomplete peace will continue to be a challenge for the stability of the region, which is likely to be contextualized and misused in conjunction with a number of other political, security, economic and other scenarios.

The key to the individual stability of every country of the region, and every ethnic group, is its capability to adhere to the required level of moral standards and ethical principles. This is applicable to the qualification of the character of the recent wars, scale and nature of the committed war crimes (including genocide) and the way the perpetrators of these crimes are treated by the citizens of the same country, or the same ethnic group.

The axiom "If you want to live in peace you must be prepared for war" is as applicable in this region as in any other part of the world. This axiom could rightly be combined with a proverb "The war comes from neighbors, the peace comes from neighbors". The clashes, conflicts and wars in the Western Balkans area have been so frequent and ruthless throughout history that some authors used the Balkan's name to coin some globally relevant terms: Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote about the "Eurasian Balkans" within his book "The Grand Chessboard" (1997),[1] and about the "Global Balkans" in his book "The Choice" (2004).[2]

The Balkan region is an area of interest for many regionally and globally relevant powers. These interests, unfortunately, are often covered with various excuses and explanations which often do not correspond with true reasons and interests of different regional and global actors and their involvement in the Balkans affairs. This was the case during the Balkans' long

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[1]   Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Grand Chessboard, Basic Books, New York, 1997, p. 123.
[2]   Zbigniew Brzezinski, Američki izbor, Politička kultura, Zagreb i CID, Podgorica, 2004, p. 38.

history, it is the case today, and most likely it will continue to be the case in the future.

Therefore, for all above mentioned and many other reasons, the intraregional cooperation within the Western Balkans will continue to be extremely relevant for the stability and security of this very region, and, at the same time, for the much wider and bigger area of Europe and Asia, and certainly it will have some sort of global relevance.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's Contribution to Regional Stability

The stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the key to the stability of the region. Throughout history wars have always been imported into Bosnia and Herzegovina and not exported from her. That was the case with the last war from '92 to '95. Current peace within the country could be called "Clausewitz upside down". Clausewitz used to argue "the war is nothing else but extension of politics by other means". Politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina today is just an extension of war by political means – most of the ethnic politics here still try to achieve the goals which they did not achieve by war.

The solutions for many of the different state problems are tightly linked to the neighboring states of Serbia and Croatia. Intraregional cooperation is, therefore, in this case, relevant both internally and externally. Many internal issues in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina are to be previously considered with Serbia and Croatia, and with the settlements made at that level it is subsequently possible to make and apply necessary internal arrangements.

Within Bosnia and Herzegovina three dominant ethnic groups – Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – should recognize, respect and tolerate sometimes opposing political and other interests of other groups. They all should also respect the existence of "the others" – which are the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina that do not identify themselves with any of the three above-mentioned ethnic groups.

Internal solutions within Bosnia and Herzegovina in most instances require the process of consultations, compromise and consensus. Very often these

mechanisms are demanding and tiring. Notwithstanding all those difficulties, no workable alternatives to the mechanism of cooperation exist. Demands of one or two ethnic groups should not be imposed on the other ethnic groups within the country. The interests and demands of "the others" also need to be considered. Long-standing and practically working solutions should encompass interests and expectations of all these participating actors.

In the field of practical security it is easy to prove that any of the ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina is most threatened – Bosniaks as the regionally weakest player between Serbs and Croats, Serbs being attacked "by the whole world" and Croats being the smallest ethnic group within the country. In essence, every group is threatened if it is not properly connected with the other ethnic groups and integrated into the cooperation mechanisms of the country and into the region. We therefore need to keep in mind that any resolution where one or two ethnic groups win over the other two or just one ethnic group is a source of new mistrust, clashes, and instabilities. All actors from the country and from the outside should respect these simple rules if they want to contribute to the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region they belong to.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a meeting place of globally relevant civilizations. Accepting the sound logic that the future of the world is in the alliance and not in the clash of civilizations, there are some other principles that could be added as a useful contribution to the future positive development of the processes within Bosnia and Herzegovina and within the Western Balkans. All actors of communication and cooperation across this region should follow the logic that if we cannot help each other we should not make things more complicate to each other. We also ought to respect some other helpful simple principles: cooperation is better than confrontation; inclusion is better than exclusion; and integration is better than separation.

The most positive historic experiences of the region are linked to the period of constructive agreements and cooperation, not to the periods of conflicts. Future cooperation mechanisms need to be based on the grounds of mutual interests, not on any kind of pure ideological or political platforms. The essential cooperation motives for every country of the region should be tied to the benefits coming out of the cooperation.

The outcome of the cooperation is directly dependent on the investment of all cooperation participants – if all countries take a sincere and well-intended attitude towards the cooperation mechanism and all countries become part of the cooperation, then all participants of the cooperation could expect positive results. Even when the results are not at the desired level, all participants could easily deal with the causes of it and find some better ways out.

No Real Alternative to NATO Membership Exists

In the context of international organizations and mechanisms dealing with security and defense relevant for the Western Balkans, a few organizations are important: the UN, the OSCE, NATO and the EU. The UN concept of Global Security, the OSCE concept of Comprehensive Security, NATO's Collective and EU's Cooperative Security concepts are relevant.

All previously mentioned concepts have some positive aspects and contributions to the mechanisms of international security and stability. But when they are tested in real circumstances, they show more deficiencies than strengths, apart from the NATO Collective Security concept. The best example of these deficiencies was the UN mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina ('92-'95), which was, most likely, the darkest period of UN peace-keeping operations history – UN troops were not able to protect themselves, let alone protecting anyone else.

NATO has proven to be the only organization capable of coping with the real demands of modern security threats and challenges, even at the highest tensions and most trying times of crises, conflict and open armed wars.

Given the complexity and fragility of the Western Balkans' stability and security, membership in NATO is being offered as the only workable option, which may guaranty the sustainable peace and development.

The preparation process is complex. The whole state is being prepared for the Alliance membership, not just the security system or the armed forces of the country. The preparation for the full-fledged membership is demanding, but the membership itself is much more demanding.

The membership in the Alliance does include a number of risks. But the risks and threats for the same country, if it is not part of NATO, are much bigger. Similar logic is applicable to the cost of the membership. It is costly to be part of NATO, but certainly much more costly not to be part of the alliance.

It is very important to keep in mind that NATO has partnerships established with almost all world powers. NATO has become a globally relevant alliance like no other political-military alliance has ever been in history. For that reason, NATO will not prevent its members to establish and maintain constructive partnerships with countries and powers outside of the Alliance. The alternatives to NATO membership that are being mentioned do not offer serious grounds for thoughts.

Demilitarization is sometimes proposed and considered in some instances, but usually instantly rejected as completely unacceptable. Any demilitarized state within so hostile an environment could easily become a target and fall victim to many aggressive states from the immediate or wider neighborhood.

The concept of neutrality is not something that could be applied only to the security and defense of the country. This concept usually calls for the political, economic and overall status of the country in terms of the manner in which it communicates with other actors of the international society.

Such a concept has shown good effects in the case of some countries belonging to other parts of Europe. Comparisons of the environment and circumstances of those countries and Western Balkans countries suggest that the application of this concept would probably give almost no effects in the case of Western Balkans.

Only economically stable and rich countries could afford themselves the neutrality concept. Taking into account political and economic distance from some international architecture and self-sufficiency that should be provided by a neutral country, the security and defense of a neutral country may become much more expensive than the cost of the same effects provided within an political-military alliance, such as NATO.

Political and military neutrality is not just a decision of a certain country. Practical application and feasibility of this choice depends on the geopolitical and geostrategic position of the state that elects to take such a path. If a state is subject to the conflicting interests of some regional and global powers – in the past, at present and very likely also in the future – then it is very difficult for it to maintain its neutrality.

NATO and EU – Separate but not Separable Organizations

In practice, for almost all transition countries of Central, Eastern, and South East Europe NATO and EU are two distinct but very interconnected international organizations.

In the case of all European transition countries that have undergone the path from socialist to NATO and EU members, it was a rule that each single country was accessed into NATO first and then considered for EU membership. Apart from security gains, it seemed that NATO accession provided more benefits (measured by growth of economy, quality of life, foreign direct investments and other aspects of state and society functions) to all these countries than the EU membership.

The idea of Serbian neutrality combined with EU membership aspirations, without first becoming a NATO member, is still to be tested. It has not worked in any other transition country case. The official Belgrade is suggesting that Serbia may simultaneously progress towards EU membership and stronger friendship with Russia. A number of practical reasons are suggesting this cohabitation of courses of progress is limited and cannot last for a long time.

Concluding Remarks

Considering the complex modern security threats and challenges and NATO membership as the best concept to cope with these threats, one should take into account the wide spectrum of positive effects and, at the same time, keep in mind a lot of negative consequences of NATO membership. In brief, for almost all countries of the Western Balkans a general conclusion could be made – it is dangerous to be a NATO member, but it

is even more dangerous not to be one. It is very expensive to be within the Alliance, but much more expensive to be out of it.

Parallel with NATO membership, states from the Western Balkans are allowed and even expected to maintain a good cooperation with Russia, with countries from the Muslim world, Asian countries (India and China) and countries from other continents.

The key stability and good cooperation base for the Western Balkans is to be provided by individual stability and prosperity of every single state in the region. Then, individual stable countries may compose a stable and prosperous region.

NATO, Western Balkans and Kosovo

Lulzim Peci

Introduction

The Western Balkan is the single sub-region of Europe that instead of taking the path of transition to democracy after the end of the Cold War ran into wars and atrocities, which ended with the dissolution of its dominant power – Yugoslavia – and with the subsequent emergence of seven new states. Nevertheless, as the region remains not fully integrated into NATO and the EU almost three decades after the fall of Berlin Wall, it is still prone to inter- and intra-state disputes and conflicts, which are of mainly nationalistic nature.

The recent crises in Ukraine and the not so recent one in Georgia, are good lessons to be learned by Brussels – and hard ones, indeed – that whatever cooperation short of full membership in NATO and EU cannot guarantee protection from external aggression and/or inter-state conflicts. However, it was NATO's involvement in the Western Balkans that created conditions for moving the region from conflict to security cooperation, and this has had four major effects. Firstly, its military involvement as a deterrent and stabilizing force has discouraged armed disputes and has transformed the region from that of "war torn" societies and hostile neighbouring relations into a relatively stable one. Secondly, NATO exercised a decisive influence on changing the patterns of hard balancing and the doctrines of massive armies that were based on territorial defence and deterrence: thus, the national armed forces were transformed into professional armies and their offensive capabilities against their neighbours were diminished significantly. Thirdly, NATO's enlargement in the Western Balkans has a fundamental role in locking the interstate borders of the individual countries of the region. Fourthly, Partnership for Peace has ended all the hopes for bilateral or regional defence counterbalancing collaboration by making the cooperation exclusively through Brussels a price for the membership.

This paper will firstly analyse briefly the role of NATO on the stability and security in the Western Balkans as a key factor for enabling an effective

intra-regional security cooperation, and secondly it will analyse and discuss possible opportunities for building formal NATO-Kosovo relations, and, finally, it will explore chances for intra-regional security cooperation.

The Impact of NATO's Involvement on Regional Security

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Crisis in Former Yugoslavia have changed NATO's perception of threats that ultimately led to 1991 and 1999 Strategic Concepts. Russia's military potential as a major conventional security threat to NATO gradually faded, though, technically, Moscow's nuclear weapon potential remained the greatest security threat. Nevertheless, concerns over political developments in Russia and possible re-emergence of its aggressive politics, especially towards what Moscow has defined as its "Near Abroad" and broader, continue to influence the security and defence thinking of the Atlantic Alliance.

On the other side, the events of the 1990s have simultaneously transformed the geopolitics of the Balkans and Post-Cold War NATO. At the beginning of the 90s, the conflicts and wars that erupted in Former Yugoslavia showed the potential for escalation, which endangered the European and international stability. Interestingly, at that time NATO's high ranking officers were rejecting the option of possible military intervention of the Alliance in Former Yugoslavia, even in the case of political consent, due to logistical shortcomings,[1] thus indicating that they were confronted with the fact of insufficient capabilities to project an overwhelming force even in its immediate neighbourhood. Political-military responses to this threat remained unclarified within NATO practically until the Kosovo War erupted, when the Alliance waged an "out of area" war against an independent state for the first time in its 50 years history. The crisis in Former Yugoslavia was one of the key driving factors of NATO's transformation from the "Old" to the "New" one, capable of conducting both, "Article V" and "Non-Article V" operations in the new international security environment that emerged after the end of the Cold War.

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[1] Henning A. Frantzen, NATO and Peace Support Operations 1991-1999: Policies and Doctrines, Taylor and Francis Group, USA and Canada, 2005, p. 61.

NATO's military involvement has changed the geopolitical landscape in the Western Balkans dramatically. NATO's mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina provided a deterrence force against the re-emergence of hostilities and of threats to peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Apart from amputating the potential for internal armed conflict within Bosnia and Herzegovina, the SFOR mission faded the possibilities for a re-emergence of an armed conflict between Belgrade and Zagreb over territories inhabited with Serbs and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The SFOR mission ended at the end of 2004, when the ESDP Peace Mission EUFOR took over.

Moreover, NATO's military presence in Kosovo has removed options of an armed inter-ethnic conflict in the country, and, in practice, is a guarantor of Kosovo's territorial integrity, questioned by Serbia. In terms of military security, NATO's presence is the fundamental mitigating factor against the occurrence of armed conflicts between Kosovo and Serbia, and serves as a deterrent force against any possible use of armed forces by Belgrade over Kosovo as well. In addition, a peaceful management of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence and its stable development would not have been conceivable without NATO's presence on the ground. In spite of the fact that NATO was not formally involved in the process of acquirement of the independence of Kosovo, in practice it was the key factor that made its implementation possible. Also, while the EU is given generous credit for the first agreement for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia of 19 April 2013, that deal was ultimately made possible via NATO's involvement, once Serbia requested guarantees for Kosovo Security Force's (KSF) non-deployment into Kosovo's northern municipalities.[2]

In addition to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, NATO was involved in a very limited level in Macedonia's internal conflict between Skopje's government and the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA).[3] NATO's role was limited to disarmament and the withdrawal of the NLA, and supporting the OSCE and EU monitors who were observing compli-

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[2] Notes from the meeting with a NATO high official, Brussels, May 2013.

[3] Operations "Essential Harvest" in summer 2001, "Amber Fox" that lasted from the end of September 2001 to mid-December 2002 and "Allied Harmony" that lasted from December 2002 to the end of March 2003.

ance by the conflicting parties of the Ohrid Agreement[4] of August 13, 2001.[5] NATO's involvement was fundamental for the end of hostilities and the democratic transformation of Macedonia.

Despite of all these achievements, NATO's military presence in Kosovo remains crucial for the stability and security of the Western Balkans, until full normalization of relations between Prishtina and Belgrade has been achieved. In essence, it is very difficult to prescribe any exit strategy for NATO from Kosovo until this aim is achieved. The presence of NATO in Kosovo is wanted by both, Prishtina and Belgrade. Kosovo wants it for the safeguarding of its territorial integrity from any possible aggressive move by Serbia, while Serbia wants it for the protection of the Serbian community in Kosovo.

Moreover, the conflicts in Former Yugoslavia have had a major impact on NATO's Post-Cold War transformation and subsequent enlargement. While the concerns of the US about Russia had a major impact on launching the Partnership for Peace (Brussels Summit, January 1994) as an instrument for building the new security relations with the former communist countries of Europe,[6] the Alliance's enlargement "would never have happened absent the U.S. and NATO's all-out and eventually successful effort to stop the war raging in Bosnia".[7] Thus, NATO's intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was fundamental for bringing to life the vision of the new Post Cold War European security architecture.

Partnership for Peace as a device for defence related cooperation between NATO and non-NATO states is addressed to all the OSCE states able and willing to contribute to this programme. It serves as the means to expand and intensify political and military cooperation throughout Europe, and to

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[4] See full text of the Ohrid Agreement: http://www.ucd.ie/ibis/filestore/Ohrid%20Framework%20Agreement.pdf.

[5] See: NATO's Operations 1949 – present, http://www.aco.nato.int/resources/21/NATO %20Operations,%201949-Present.pdf.

[6] For further explanation see: Ronald D. Asmus: Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance remade itself for a New Era, Columbia University Press, New York, 2002, pp. 48-57.

[7] Ibid p. 124.

diminish threats to peace, to build and strengthen relationships by promoting a spirit of practical cooperation and commitment to democratic principles that underpin the alliance. On the other hand, it also serves as a vehicle for membership of new aspiring states. The Partnership for Peace, through its political mechanism of consultations, proved to be the "preventive defence" program aiming at the creation of the conditions for peace, thereby minimizing the likelihood of war.[8] Since PfP and NATO both call for consultations under Article IV of the Treaty, if consultations work, NATO will never have to use Article V.[9]

PfP has had an impressive impact in shaping the security, defence and foreign policy cultures of many of the states of Central and Eastern Europe, through the promotion of good neighbouring relations, transparency on defence related matters and consultations through Brussels. Most importantly, in terms of the reformation of strategic cultures[10] and foreign policies of the aspirant countries, PfP has ended any hope for bilateral or regional defence collaboration, thus making cooperation exclusively through Brussels as a price that countries should pay for the membership.[11]

Nevertheless, though additional progress can be made in this direction, as it is widely recognized, the strategic prize of Article V remains the ultimate guarantee of stability. This is what Partnership for Peace, no matter how it

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[8]   Perry. J. W., "Keeping the Door Open?," in S. Serfaty eds. *NATO at 50, What now, What next, What else?*, February 10, 1999, Center for Strategic and International Studies, p. 3.

[9]   Kipp W. J.: "From Prague... After Paris and Madrid," in Stephen J. Blank eds.: European Security and NATO Enlargement: A View from Central Europe, Strategic Studies Institute, 1998. p. 16.

[10] See the basic definition of Strategic Culture: "Strategic culture is a number shared of beliefs, norms and ideas within the given society that generate specific expectations about the respective community's preferences and actions in security and defence policy. In this context, a community's security and defence identity, expressed through preferences and behavioral patterns, derives from shared experiences and accepted narratives specific to a particular security community" quoted from: Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich and Alexandra Jonas (Eds.) Strategic Cultures in Europe, Security and Defence Policies Across the Continent, Spriger VS, Postdam, 2013, p. 12.

[11] Ibid, p. 34.

is consolidated or institutionalized, fails to provide,[12] which is a proven fact by the recent annexations by Russia of the parts of territories of Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014).

NATO's decisions on invitation for membership remain to be taken on a case-by-case basis, taking into account political, security and military considerations.[13] Moreover, the fulfilment of qualifications for membership are considered by NATO as a "necessary condition" but not as a "sufficient condition" – which is going to be determined by the Alliance –, and it has to "serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance, strengthen its effectiveness and enhance the overall European security and stability". This means that NATO membership of the aspirant countries of the Western Balkans is not guaranteed, even in the cases of fulfilment of qualifications. Nevertheless, the opposite might be the case as well, that is the invitation for membership without complete fulfilment of qualifications for membership – if that is in the strategic interest of NATO.

NATO has developed relations with the countries of the Western Balkans since the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC, 1992), later renamed to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC, 1997), as well as with the introduction of the Partnership for Peace (1994) and the Membership Action Plan (MAP, 1999), though with different pace and intensity.

Albania was the first country of the region to build formal relations with NATO by joining the NACC in 1992 and PfP in 1994, followed by Macedonia that joined PfP in the same year. Croatia joined the PfP in 2000, while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia joined in 2006. Albania and Croatia were the most successful countries of the region by joining the Alliance in 2009, followed by Montenegro that received an invitation for membership in 2015 and joined the Alliance in June 2017. Macedonia's membership to NATO is pending due to the unresolved issue of its

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[12] Hunter, Robert, Strategic Survey 1996/97, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 118.

[13] Klaiber K.P,, "The Membership Action Plan: Keeping NATO's Door Open," *NATO Review*, Vol 47, No. 2, Summer 1999, p. 25.

name dispute with Greece, though it has fulfilled the membership criteria, while the MAP for Bosnia and Herzegovina is pending since 2012 due to the unresolved issue of the registration of immovable defence property as a state property.

Regardless of its aspirations for NATO membership, Kosovo is the single country in the wider Euro-Atlantic Area that did not get an offer to participate in the Partnership for Peace, mainly because of the opposition of NATO's non-recognizers, namely Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. Kosovo's isolation from NATO's consultative instrument (EAPC) and PfP is in itself a challenge for the completion of the security architecture of the region and of Europe at large, especially due to the unresolved disputes with Belgrade and the uncompleted national defence institutions.

Serbia is the only country in the region that has chosen "military neutrality" and has no ambitions to join the Alliance, though it has intensive relations with NATO. Nevertheless, regardless of its membership in the Partnership for Peace and its aspirations to join the European Union, the "military neutrality" that Serbia is claiming for itself is not similar to the neutrality of the EU member states, like Sweden and Finland. Serbia is the only security free-rider in the region that is strengthening military cooperation with Russia[14] at the same time when the West is in a harsh collision course with the Kremlin. This cooperation might have troublesome consequences for regional security, especially if Serbia and Russia jointly undertake steps in a wrong direction. Moreover, Serbia is continuing intensive defence and military cooperation with Russia, despite of the concerns expressed by the West.[15]

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[14] Like the establishment of the Joint Serbian-Russian Centre for Reaction to Emergency Situations, in October 2011. Moreover, after the crisis in Ukraine, Serbia is the single country in Europe, but Belarus, that is conducting military exercises with Kremlin's military troops on its and Russia's soil.

[15] The European Parliament Resolution on Serbia (February 4th, 2016) called Serbia to progressively align its foreign and security policy with EU policy, including the relationship with Russia, and stated that joint exercises between Russia and Serbia are regrettable. B92: European Parliament adopts resolution on Serbia, February 4th 2016, http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2016&mm=02&dd=04&nav_id=9 6935.

However, the PfP as well as the NATO enlargement prospects have had a crucial effect on the shaping of defence and security policies of the Balkan states. They have crushed any dreams that extremist political elites of the countries of the region might have had in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War for returning the area back into the conditions similar with those of the Balkan Wars. The conflict in Former Yugoslavia, caused by Belgrade's ambition to create "Greater Serbia" over the ashes of the 90s War, indicated clearly in which direction the region might have headed in the absence of NATO's involvement.

Moreover, NATO's cooperation and integration mechanisms have had a crucial impact on radical reforms of the defence policy makings of the region's countries. In addition, the past patterns of hard balancing and the doctrines of massive armies based on territorial defence and deterrence have been transformed into those of professional armies, while the offensive capabilities of the Western Balkan countries against their neighbours were amputated significantly.[16]

Interestingly, coinciding invitations for membership to Albania and Croatia by NATO and the Declaration of Independence of Kosovo in 2008 did have a fundamental effect in locking of the interstate borders of the Western Balkans countries. NATO membership has faded ambitions of a part of ethnic Albanian elites in Kosovo for joinder with Albania and of a part of ethnic Croatian elites in Bosnia and Herzegovina for joinder with Croatia.

We should mention here that the case of German unification in 1990 has built a precedent within the Alliance regarding the unification of two independent countries, when one of them is a NATO member. NATO members firstly gave the consent for unification of the Federal German Republic with the Democratic Republic of Germany, and only after that they welcomed the Unified Germany into NATO, something that would not have been possible without great efforts of the US Administration.[17]

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[16] For the latest data on military capabilities of the Western Balkan countries see: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, "The Military Balance 2016", February 09, 2016.

[17] For a profounder explanation see: Michael Cox and Steven Hurst, "His finest hour: George Bush and the Diplomacy of German Unification", Diplomacy & Statecraft, Vol. 13, No. 4, Frank Cass, London, December 2002.

If this is to be applied in, let us say, the case of hypothetical unification of Albania with Kosovo, then the consent of all NATO members is required, the acquirement of which is, indeed, highly improbable. This means that, under existing circumstances, the unification of Albania with Kosovo is not possible without previous decisions of Tirana to dismember itself from NATO, which, in turn, is in collision with the highest security interests of both Albania and Kosovo. On the other side, this implies that regardless of its membership in the Partnership for Peace, Serbia will, up to a certain extent, continue to be a free security rider whose compass will oscillate between Moscow and Brussels. This, in turn, means that the security of the region, and especially that of Kosovo and of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will continuously be challenged as long as all the countries of the Western Balkans do not become NATO members. Thus, in order to overcome the uncertainty of the security situation in the region, it is necessary for NATO to pave the way for a fast membership of Macedonia and to provide the MAP for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the PfP for Kosovo.

Kosovo after NATO's Warsaw Summit

Almost nine years after the Declaration of Independence, and more than seventeen years after the beginning of NATO's peace-keeping mission, Kosovo remains the only country in the wider Euro-Atlantic area that has no official cooperation with the Alliance. While the European Union has managed to build contractual relations with Kosovo[18], regardless of its non-recognition by five EU member countries[19], NATO has not made even a single formal step in this direction.

Despite of its strong aspirations to join the Alliance, Kosovo's perspective for joining the Partnership for Peace Programme and for getting the Membership Action Plan remains uncertain as a consequence of the non-recognition by four NATO members (Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain). However, it is difficult to imagine further development of the secu-

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[18] On July 27th , 2014, the EU and Kosovo chief negotiators initialed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Kosovo in Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/ enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/kosovo/ index_en.htm.

[19] Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

rity architecture and the establishment of armed forces as well as the subsequent transformation of Kosovo from a security consumer to security provider without the official cooperation with NATO.

In this regard, on November 19th 2015, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Isa Mustafa, sent a letter to the Secretary General of NATO, Mr. Jens Stoltenberg, in which he requested for Kosovo to establish an individualized and cooperative relationship with NATO. This cooperation, in the Prime Minister's words, could include the following elements:

a)   regular political dialogue between NATO and Kosovo at the highest political and ministerial levels;
b)   the establishment of a Kosovo liaison with NATO headquarters in Brussels;
c)   assistance, assessment, and development of an individualized cooperation program to form the basis for a strengthened cooperation with NATO;
d)   upgrading NATO's civilian and military presence in Kosovo and, specifically, the consolidation of the NLAT (NATO's Liaison Advisory Team) and of the NAT (NATO's Advisory Team) into a single integrated team;
e)   Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) co-sponsorship of grants for Kosovo's institutions, NGOs, universities, think-tanks, and other pertinent civil society organizations dealing with peace and security-related issues;
f)   access to NATO's programs and tools, such as the Science for Peace and Security and Building Integrity Programs, which can enhance cooperation and dialogue with NATO and its partners based on scientific research innovation and knowledge exchange with Kosovo. [20]

The official response to this concrete initiative of Kosovo in cooperation with NATO was expected to be given in the Warsaw Summit of NATO, which took place on July 8-9 2016 in Poland. However, in the Communiqué of the Summit, issued by the heads of the states and governments that

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[20]   The letter of the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Mr. Isa Mustafa, addressed to Mr. Jens Stoltenberg, the Secretary General of NATO, November 19, 2015, Ref: 192/2015.

participated in the meeting of the North-Atlantic Council, there was no response to the initiative of Kosovo, which was postponed for the December meeting of the Foreign Ministers.[21] Nevertheless, in the meantime the Alliance made the first step on Prishtina's requests by integrating NATO Liaison and Advisory Team and NATO Advisory Team into the NATO Advisory and Liaison Team, which was established on August 24th, 2016.

However, despite the fact that this Communiqué was welcomed by President Thaçi and Prime Minister Mustafa, the hopes that NATO will make any larger moves towards addressing the requests of the Government of Kosovo are not high. The major obstacle for the advancement of the relations between Kosovo and NATO in the Warsaw Summit was the opposing attitude of Spain.[22]

Furthermore, despite the fact that the KSF was invited on the initiative of its supporters[23] in the largest military manoeuvres of the East Wing of NATO after the Cold War named "Anaconda 16", which took place in the first half of June 2016 in Poland,[24] its participation was cancelled, again, because of the opposition of Spain.[25] This indicates clearly the consistency of the opposing policy of Madrid towards the advancement of the relations of Kosovo with NATO. Thus, as a consequence of this opposing attitude of Spain there is little probability that NATO's approach towards Kosovo will change in the short term.[26]

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[21] Point 89: "… the Alliance will continue to support the development of the security organisations in Kosovo, including through the NATO advisory team on the ground and in accordance with Allied decisions, and will keep the nature of further support under review. We note Kosovo's request for an enhanced relationship with NATO and will respond no later than the December Foreign Ministerial on ways to further develop our support.", Warsaw Summit Communiqué, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm?selected Locale=en.

[22] Conversation with a high official of NATO in Kosovo, Prishtina, July 18, 2016.

[23] Conversation with a high official of the Kosovo Government, July 20, 2016.

[24] Guardian: Nato countries begin largest war game in eastern Europe since cold war, June 6, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/06/nato-launches-largest-war-game-in-eastern-europe-since-cold-war-anaconda-2016.

[25] Conversation with a high official of NATO in Kosovo, Prishtina, July 18, 2016.

[26] Conversation with a high official of NATO in Kosovo, Prishtina, July 18, 2016.

Nevertheless, the official and structural dialogue between NATO and Kosovo is not impossible. The Foreign Minister of Latvia, Mr. Edgar Rinkevics, has already indicated that:

> "If Kosovo and NATO countries are ready to cooperate, a structural and formal dialogue can be developed. A good example is Kosovo's structural dialogue with the European Union and this can be done with NATO as well."[27]

However, what this possible "structural and formal dialogue" will entail remains a fundamental issue for Kosovo's perspectives for the membership in PfP and eventual integration within NATO.

Firstly, while Kosovo is not a formal member of the Partnership for Peace, NATO's dialogue with Prishtina has to provide both assistance and assessment of the defence sector development, similarly to the Partnership Action Plan (PAP) on Defence Institution Building (DIB), introduced at the NATO Istanbul Summit (June 2004).[28] The Defence Institution Building covers Democratic Control of Defence Activities, Civilian Participation in Developing and Implementing Defence Policy, Legislative and Judicial Oversight of Defence, Assessment of Security Risks and National Defence Requirements, Defence Management, International Norms in Defence Governance, Personnel Management in Defence, Financial Planning within Defence and International Defence Cooperation.[29] This framework for defence institution building will ensure the development of a democratic and sustainable defence sector of Kosovo.

Secondly, the dialogue has to prepare the future armed forces of Kosovo for operations with NATO forces. The Partnership Planning and Review Process (PARP) model offers suitable tools to develop interoperability of the future Kosovo armed forces with NATO as well as for evaluating capabilities of these forces.[30]

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[27] "Dialogu i Kosovës me NATO-n është i mundshëm" KOHAnet, http://koha.net/?id =27 &l= 23095, August 26, 2014.

[28] NATO Topics: Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building, http://www.nato.int/ cps/en/natolive/topics_50083.htm.

[29] For further explanation see: Hari Bucur-Marcu, Essentials of Defence Institution Building, LAVAK, Vienna – Geneva, 2009.

[30] NATO Topics: Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_68277.htm.

Successful implementation of these two components of the dialogue with NATO will prepare Kosovo for the Membership Action Plan (MAP), after all the member countries of the Alliance have recognized its independence and after it becomes a member of the Partnership for Peace. This dialogue would also deliver a strong political signal that NATO has a credible open door for Kosovo's membership and, as such, will have a major effect on the general security and stability circumstances of the Western Balkans.

However, at the end of the day this structural dialogue has to be viewed as a temporary measure for building relations between NATO and Kosovo. Only the full membership in PfP and in EAPC will enable Kosovo to become part of the NATO led security and defence cooperation mechanism. Thus, the United States and other member countries of the Alliance have to undertake bold steps in order for Kosovo to attain first the PfP and, eventually, the NATO membership, which will mark the removal of the last dividing line on European soil and which will preclude Serbia to continue to preserve for itself the role of a "security free rider", juxtaposed with the revival of the Russian influence in the region.

Instead of Conclusion:
Chances for Intraregional Security Cooperation

The Western Balkans nowadays faces a favourable, but also a complex security and defence environment. Montenegro's membership in NATO has a major impact on increasing the security and stability in the region. Thus, the territory covering Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia has become a sort of an "island" in the midst of the Alliance's "castle" in South Eastern Europe, thus fundamentally diminishing the possibilities for inter-state conflicts.

However, the frozen prospects of Macedonia for full NATO and EU membership as a consequence of the name dispute with Greece, and Kosovo's lack of prospects for building formal integration relations with the Alliance, due to the non-recognition by Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain, will encourage internal instability and fuel nationalism in the Western Balkans countries, as well as provide a ground for latent instability of the region.

On the other side, double headed policies of Serbia and Republika Srpska with the West and Russia have transformed them into harbours of Kremlin's interests and intentions against the West. Russia is exerting its influence in the Western Balkans by exploiting the region's uneasy ethno-national relations and the weaknesses of the states that are not members of the European Union and NATO, and especially of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also of Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro. There is no doubt that Russia will continue to have a fertile ground for achieving its aims, as long as the Brussels indecisiveness and the lack of a strong US leadership regarding further enlargement of NATO and of the EU will continue to prevail. Moreover, NATO's and EU's indecisiveness, which Brussels is trying to justify by labelling them as a "strategic patience", has not proven to be a recipe for successful transition, irreversible path towards security and stability as well as integration of the region. Instead, almost all Western Balkans states are captured by their corrupted political elites and are ruled in an authoritarian manner.

However, the end of NATO's "strategic patience" is necessary in order to move the region from latent instability towards enduring stability and security. The negotiations among allies for ending the accommodation with the status-quo, that is, with frozen prospects for full NATO membership of Macedonia due to the name dispute with Greece and those of Kosovo for PfP and eventual NATO membership due to the non-recognition by Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain have to start sooner, rather than later.

In the current international circumstances, there is a need for "strategic impatience" by the Alliance in order to integrate the countries of the Western Balkans that are aspiring membership. Moreover, full integration of Macedonia and Kosovo as aspiring countries in NATO will curtain the revisionist policies of the Kremlin in the wider region by using Serbia as its harbour. On the other hand, NATO membership of Macedonia and Kosovo will also make the final push on Belgrade to remain neutral in the spirit of the European Security and Defence Policy (like Sweden and Finland) or to abandon formal neutrality and become a full NATO and EU member. In this case, the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into NATO and the EU most probably would not face any significant obstacles caused by nationalism.

In addition, the Brussels facilitated dialogue between Prishtina and Belgrade will have to address the lack of any cooperation between them in the field of defence and security as the last unresolved inter-state status and sovereignty related issue in the region. This dialogue is necessary for addressing the modalities on the confidence building measures between the two countries that can be based on the OSCE model on the Confidence and Security Building Measures,[31] and particularly on those of Risk Reduction,[32] of Prior Notification of Certain Military Activities, and of Observation of Certain Military Activities. There is no doubt that, due to its presence in Kosovo and in Serbia (NATO's Military Liaison Office in Belgrade) as well as the fact that Kosovo is not a member of OSCE, NATO is the Organization most suitable to facilitate such arrangements between Prishtina and Belgrade.

These chances for intra- and inter-regional cooperation are feasible as well as on the table. If used and employed timely by NATO and the region's countries, the last dividing lines in Europe will be erased and the Western Balkans as a synonym for an unintegrated region will cease to exist.

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[31] Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence and Security-Building Measures, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, FSC.COC/1/11, Vienna, November 30th, 2011.

[32] *Ibid.*, Risk Reduction Section: Mechanism for Consultation and Cooperation as regards to unusual Military Activities, Cooperation as regards to Hazardous Incident of a Military Nature, and Voluntary Hosting to Dispel Concerns about Military Activities, pp. 12-14.

The Transformation of War:
The War of the Fourth Generation (New Wars) and the Western Balkans

Nano Ruzhin

Abstract

According to Mary Kaldor, in her book New and Old Wars, new wars are:

a) fought by varying combinations of state and non-state networks,
b) use identity politics to fight in the name of a label as opposed to ideology,
c) attempting to achieve political rather than physical control of the population through fear and terror,
d) no longer financed through the state but through other predatory means that seek the continuation of violence.

Evolutions of contemporary armed conflicts represent a big challenge in times of globalization. One of the basic characteristics of the nature of wars is that the State loses its monopoly on aggressions and wars. This develops the doctrine of new wars, or fourth generation wars, a concept that has been launched by American strategists in 1989 as a kind of generalization of long term irregular and asymmetrical war. Since 11 September, the world experienced the most tragic emanation of this kind of war by the Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and other places in the USA. Since that day, through the attacks in London, Madrid, Paris, Moscow, Istanbul, Brussels, Kabul, Karachi, the world is confronted with an asymmetrical danger. At the last NATO Summit in Warsaw, the slogan was – *An essential Alliance in a more dangerous world*! Understandably, NATO is adapting to this changed security environment. It also remains committed to fulfilling its three core tasks: collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security. The Alliance will make important decision based on two key pillars: protecting its citizens through modern deterrence and defense and projecting stability beyond its borders. In that context, it is important to raise the question about one of the most unstable and underde-

veloped European region: the Western Balkans. What are the positions of the Western Balkan countries towards the fourth generation of armed conflicts? May this strategic space be destabilized? What are the dangers that may destabilize the region?

Key words: new wars, terrorism, NATO, Western Balkan

Introduction

Looking past all the horrors, the tragedies and our emotional perceptions, is it possible to encounter something common between the 9 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre, the 2002 Karachi strikes, the July 2005 London subway attacks, the December 2006 strike at the Barajas airport in Madrid, the series of attacks in Paris (the satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo or the Bataklan club in 2015), in Brussels, as well as in Khartoum, Tripoli, Istanbul, Mossul, Bagdad etc., with thousands of victims, bodies blown up, men and women decapitated, terrible tortures, mass executions of martyrs dressed in orange, the aggression of ISIS members, the demolition of historical heritage, the kidnapping of the girls by Boko Haram, the Nigerian version of Al Qaeda, the vicious attacks of the Somali salafists El Shabaab …

Is there a mutual denominator between these tragic events and specific forms of waging battle, of execution of prisoners and civilians? Is the world faced with a new kind of violence and destabilization? Can we speak of a new type of armed conflicts and violence? This is armed, political violence between the state on one, and organized political, ethnic or religious groups inspired by political or religious motives, forms of organized crime and mass violation of human rights, often with genocidal proportions, on the other hand.

Why the term "new wars"? **First** and foremost, because they differ from the previous intense confrontations in terms of their *low intensity*. **Secondly**, in classic cases of clashes the state "privatized" the violence as the only subject of wars, always driven by their global ideological goals. Besides, in his "Clash of civilization", Huntington concludes that "the 20th was a century of ideological clashes, while the 21st century will be the century of the clash of civilizations." The new wars are inspired by religious and ideologi-

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cal policies and differ from the global ideological aims of the earlier wars. **Thirdly,** the violence against civilians within the new wars transformed into the fundamental goal of war, while in classic wars the civilian victims were treated as "collateral damage", although the holocaust was the crudest form of genocide against the Jewish people and other so called "non-Aryan" races.

Any methodological approach poises the question of new wars analysis. **Fourthly**, the new wars should be analyzed in a globalization context and the decrease of the role of the state in terms of both *peaceful processes* and *in times of armed clashes*. **Fifthly**, the next dimension of the new wars is the trans-nationality of the armed forces, with recruitment of mercenaries and religious fanatics from different countries. **Sixthly,** their methods of violence are the privatization of violence over civilians belonging to other faiths or people who do not approve of their ideology or belief, without respect for the international military law. **Seven,** *the economy of new wars* differs from the economy of the *traditional war*. The traditional war was defined by a centralized and autarchic economy, while the new wars are characterized by a decentralized and diffused economy. At the same time, the theater of operations is diverse: Western Europe, the Middle East, USA, the cape of Africa, Western Africa.

According to Mary Kaldor, in her book "New and Old Wars", new wars:

a) are fought by varying combinations of state and non-state networks,
b) use identity politics to fight in the name of a label as opposed to ideology,
c) attempt to achieve political, rather than physical control of the population through fear and terror,
d) are no longer financed through the state but through other predatory means that seek the continuation of violence.

The evolutions of the modern armed clashes represent a huge challenge to the era of globalization. One of the main characteristics of the nature of wars is the fact that *the state loses the monopoly over the violence and the wars.* Based on this thesis, the doctrine of the *new wars, or the wars of the fourth generation,* was developed. The concept of the *fourth generation of wars* was devel-

oped as early as 1989 by American strategists as a sort of *generalization of long-term, but irregular and asymmetrical wars.*

The Transformation of Wars

With the occurrence of the *state-nation,* the wars between countries that created the modern European politics seem to be already dated remnants of the onetime modules of waging war. The last decades were marked by the amenity of the conventional inter-country where wars went on between professional military formations for protection, defense or expansion of the state territory according to the theoretical rules guaranteed by international law – *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello.*

In Europe, the professionalization of the army is in synergy with the establishment of the central state. Research shows that during the 17th century after the signing of the Westphalia treaty in 1648, the mercenary armies transformed into national armies and this occupation grew into one of the main pillars in the creation of the country-nation. The military structure played a significant role in the process of creation of the structure of the country-nation. This is a case where the existence of the country-nation which also takes over the control in an international context, be it war or peace, the state imposes itself as the only subject of the monopoly on violence.

Wars are becoming symmetrical, inter-military, conventional, frontal and with a small number of civilian victims. Thus, as Mary Kaldor writes, the idea of war as an "inter-country activity, i.e. an action performed by countries as a war of one side against the other, would be imposed progressively after the Westphalia peace treaty." The countries are becoming the main actors in wars and in peace.[1]

With the intensifying of globalization, the classic symmetric-type warfare began to disappear. Today, we are witnessing a new kind of armed clashes, *endless and aimless* conflicts, frozen conflicts which represent *both war and*

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[1] Jean-Marc Flukiger, Nouvelles guerres – Nouvelles guerres et Théorie de la guerre juste, Edition Infolio, Suisse, 2011, p.18.

peace, or *neither war nor peace*. This type of clashes were conceptualized towards the end of the 1990s by Mary Kaldor of the London School of Economics, then by Martin van Creveld of the University of Jerusalem and co-author of La transformation de la guerre[2] and the American colonel of the naval forces, William Lind.

The aforementioned researchers agree that *the states are losing the monopoly on violence which was also their legitimate right, while the nature of the warfare changes its character.* As an expression of such a viewpoint, the theory of the *new wars* was developed, aiming to prove that *the states are losing their monopoly on violence, since the wars have gone through serious transformations. This change came due to the fact that the number of direct conflicts between states was significantly decreased.* That is why the new wars are also known as *the fourth generation wars* characterized by a strong dispersion and a vast lack of definition. The difference between the state of peace and that of a war disappears to an extent almost impossible to define. These wars are not *linear and do not have a determined field of clash-champ de bataille* or a defined front. The military operations are aimed at depth in order to reach and affect the entire society, each citizen, every member of the state in question. Finally, the war moves over into the domain of the internet.

Fourth Generation Wars

After the 11 September 2001 Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and other US targets, American president George. W. Bush declared that the USA is *at war* and he is therefore introducing a decree regarding national mobilization.[3] Simultaneously, for the first time in its history, NATO activated Article 5 of the Washington treaty on the Alliance collective security operation. As soon as October 2001, American and British forces bombed Taliban positions in Afghanistan, thus initiating the mandate of the ISAF forces at first under US command, and later on lead by NATO Fourteen years later, on the occasion of the terrorist attacks of ISIS on targets in Paris, president Hollande used practically similar wording and the

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[2]   Ed. du Rocher, Paris, 2011.
[3]   http://fr.wikipedia.org/w/index.phptitle=M% C3A9dias aux %C389tats-Unis&action =edit&redlink=1.

same remake of military operations. France did not call for activation of Article 5 of the Washington treaty, because that would presume land operations in Syria and Iraq, but the rhetoric of the French analysis mentioned this clause at several occasions. Addressing the nation, President Hollande repeated that *France is at war* thirteen times. *From the beginning of 2015, ISIS attacked Paris, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Libya…* Hollande pointed out. That same day, the French Mirages carried out intense bombardments of the positions of ISIS in Raqqa, Syria, even though Paris was previously moderate towards ISIS which was battling Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad.[4]

Is there another manifestation of the war of the fourth generation on the rise? In its essence, the fourth generation war is a concept which was developed as early as 1989 by American strategists. The concept was first mentioned in the Marine Corps Gazette (1989), a professional journal of U.S. Marines founded in 1916*,* and other similar articles contributing to a greater refinement of the strategy ensued. Finally, it was developed by Thomas X. Hammes in "The Sling and the Stones. On war in the 21st Century".[5]

The authors of this paper use as a basis the concept of disputing of the state as *a main actor of armed violence*, at the same time pointing out that *throughout history multiple generations of armed conflicts and forms appeared.*

1. The first generation of armed conflicts was marked by its *linear tactics* and referred to the time period before the Napoleonic Wars. It is characterized by the use of the first riffles, barbed wire, indirect fire and movement.

2. The second generation of armed conflicts was a result of the affirmation of the *art of waging war*, as it was conceptualized by *Carl von Clausewitz,* but also by technological innovations. This generation of armed conflicts corresponds with the *grosso modo* of World War I.

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[4] William Audureau – Apres les attentats, les similitudes entre les discours de Holande et de Bush en 2001, Paris: Le Monde, 17.11.2015.

[5] Thomas X. Hammes The Sling and the Stones. On war in the 21st Century (Zenith Press, New York, 2004).

3. <u>The third generation</u> of armed conflicts is expressed through a dominance of manoeuvres and strategies of the classical warfare during World War II, as well as the Cold Was in Central Europe.

4. <u>The fourth generation</u> of armed conflicts according to the afore-mentioned authors is expressed via a *generalization of the irregular/asymmetrical long-lasting warfare.* On account of the prior clashes when a swift reaction was called for, this type of wars does not have such a tendency.

This series of clashes also include the rebel actions which rely on a series of political, social, religious or another type of networks, as well as the occupation of the Crimea by Russia, i.e. the pro-Russian operations of the rebels in the Ukraine. This is why another characteristic is added to them – the <u>hybrid warfare</u>.[6]

The described concept of hybrid warfare underwent numerous variations, among which the <u>*techno-guerrilla*</u> stood especially out, more and more using advanced technologies in the <u>*irregular clashes*</u>. This concept was firstly evoked by General Guy Brossollet in France in 1970.

In the 21st century, this type of operations mutated and its applicants became the sub-state entities such as Hezbollah, Al Qaeda or ISIS. These subjects dismiss the classic polarization from World War II or the cold war times. In this way, a dominant perception is imposed that it is only the sub-state entities, provided they get their hands on sophisticated technological weapons and even those of mass destruction, would not withhold in using them or waging irregular warfare. There is no doubt that the hybrid warfare is becoming a reality.[7] Today, we are already speaking of "cyber attacks" and "cyber cold wars" when referring to the relations between Russia and the NATO allies.

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[6] Michael-Kofman-Russian hybrid warfare and other dark arts, http://warontherocks. com/category/commentary/March 11.2016).

[7] Techno-guerilla et guerre hybride. Le pire des deux monde. Paris: Nuvis, 2014.

New Non-State or Sub-State Players Taking the Former Place of States in Warfare

The new wars are characterized by the come up of new players. On one hand, there are paramilitary formations often times mandated by governments or neighboring states in order to avoid the responsibility of states and governments for the committed crimes and violence. Another group frequently talked about is that in the context of the creation of private security firms and agencies employing mercenaries. Here we can differentiate between former officers and soldiers who were discharged from armies or retired officers employed as councilors in other armies and those who participate in educating, training or counseling or even in military operations of various formations of paramilitary units, independent of their native states and contracted by occupied subjects. The third type of participants is the regular foreign armed forces and councilors employed by multilateral organizations such as NATO, UN and African Unity.

ISIS – Unidentified Terrorist Subject

ISIS occupies a separate place in this analysis. In 1938, German legal mind and philosopher Carl Schmitt[8] offered a precise description and an amazingly correct diagnosis of today's world in which we recognize the role of ISIS and the initial inertness of USA. He writes:

> "A global war, widely asymmetrical and free of any control and any legal restriction, within which the great neo-imperial force is not employed against individual states, but only against the global partisans (Kosmospartisanen) who operate on an international level, using means and following the aims of a civil war."

This is how, almost eight decades ago, Carl Schmitt envisaged the war of the fourth generation where there are no global conflicts, but a sort of international chaos between two violences whose resolution even the strongest international players do not get involved into.

The rise of ISIS and the enabling of its free space to act resulted in the impression that the inertness of the international forces enabled the development of chaos in Syria and Iraq. In this respect, we ask the question "What

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[8]   Guerre discriminatoire et logique des grands espaces, Krisis, 2001.

is ISIS?" Is ISIS a terrorist group? According to Xavier Raufer,[9] if we were to compare ISIS and Hezbollah, the latter is very easily identified. It is a paramilitary formation or a Shia militia from Lebanon, with a strong tropism, comprised of, trained and manipulated by the special forces of the Islamic republic of Iran. ISIS cannot be defined in such a way. Is ISIS a *terrorist group*? No, since no terrorist group owns so much heavy weapons as ISIS. Its military reserves are bigger than those of the armies of most middle European countries. Simultaneously with the severe crimes and televised executions of captives and civilian population, in towns under ISIS's control the number of suicide attacks dropped significantly, concludes X. Raufer, adding another remark: "The military success in the field is not of a terrorist, but of a military nature."[10] Is ISIS a guerilla formation? On the contrary, opposite of the rules of guerilla warfare, ISIS does not back out of its territory as did the guerilla fighters, but establishes a system of caliphate theocracy with a strict implementation of sharia law and revenge punishment of "sinners" or believers belonging to other confessions. ISIS literally promotes *the clash of civilizations.*

The Western Balkans and the New Wars

The optimistic version of the Western Balkans is its inclusion in the NATO integration. According to the agenda of the EU Summit in Thessaloniki in 2003, Brussels ambitiously invited the Balkan nations to intensify the reforms towards EU membership. At the same time, the strategy of the NATO open door policy has similar ambitions. Out of all Balkan states, it is only Serbia that officially attempts to maintain its neutral position in light of the Alliance airstrikes in 1999. All other countries, excluding Republika Srpska as part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, dream of an EU and NATO future. For a long time, this region was treated as a *European Rimland* over whose corridors the interests of Moscow and Washington clashed during the Cold War, and it continues to affect the strategic interests of the big players. It is precisely this aspect that can represent a reason for the occurrence of the *new wars* in the Balkans. For now, apart from the interethnic

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[9] L'Etat islamique objet terroriste non identifie, Revue europeenne de geopolitique, Paris, Sorbone, Prof.Michel Korinman, octobre 2015.
[10] X. Raufer, Ibid. p. 2.

clashes with the participation of paramilitary formations which, according to Mary Kaldor, also fall under a type of *new wars*, the most serious threat to the stability of the region are the possible *newest generation* terrorist attacks. Despite the fact that several incidents manifested themselves, still, for the region of the western Balkans it is more about dangers and challenges, than about events of the kind of terrorist attacks that took place in New York, Paris, Brussels, Madrid or London.

In the eyes of the analysts, the Western Balkans and its 20 million inhabitants are a serious space for jihadist recruitment. There are some 5 million Muslims living in the Western Balkans, almost the same as in France with its 65 million population, but according to the number of deployed jihadists across the battlefields in Iraq, Syria and Libya, the Balkan states are right behind Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia.[11] How do you explain the development of radical Islam in the Balkans? Without a doubt, the Western Balkans is a fertile ground[12] for the development of Salafism expansion. For a long time, these countries were considered not under a direct threat considering the fact that the salafist communities were severely isolated as early as the time of adoption of the Dayton treaty in 1995. This situation changed in 2015, with the introduction of a propagandist campaign of jihadist originating from Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia from the battlefields in Iraq and Syria. In this context, two aspects should be taken into consideration: the **first**, that the state in Islamic communities and mosques in the Balkans has been complicated by the presence of radical elements which became uncontrollable. **Second**, as Loic Tregoures would conclude, "the terrorist threats originating in the Balkans are first and foremost threats to the Balkan peoples themselves".

There are several historic and social factors which can help to explain the development of radical Islam in the Balkans:

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[11] Les Balkans, terre de recrutement pour les jihadistes, La Libre.be http://www.ipmstore.be/weekend, 28.09.2014.

[12] Loic Tregoures-Developpment de l'Islam radical dans les Balkans-quel realite? IRIS, Paris, http://www.iris-france.org/analyses.

1. As for historical factors, we could refer to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995), when for the first time jihadists from the Maghreb, the Gulf and Europe participated on the Bosnian army side. They received Bosnian passports and at the same time preached a different, more radical Islam, much different from that practiced in the Balkans. Simultaneously, thanks to hefty donations, multiple religious schools-madrasas and humanitarian organizations, greatly influencing the Muslim population, were established. Turkish architecture was applied in the building and the construction of the mosques in favor of the Middle Eastern style. The authorities lost all control over what went on in these religious institutions.

2. The petrodollars started to attract the younger population to the internet messages of the wahhabists and their offers. The new generation of imams was shaped with the assistance of the scholarships in the fundamentalists schools of the Arab peninsula. After their return to the Balkans, they would spread jihadism in the newly built mosques. According to Paskal Davidovicz,[13] *besides a crossroads of the jihadists,* the jihadist environment *also represents a crossroads of the arms trade.* It is believed that the number in question is 500,000 weapons, 250,000 of which are Kalashnikov rifles. The road of arms passes through the Balkans from Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia and ends up in Hungary, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxemburg and France. The greater part of the Kalashnikovs used in France and Belgium come from the Balkans.[14]

3. The social aspects are also a factor which could be used to interpret the evolution of the Islamic radicalism in the Balkans: the high rate of unemployment among the younger population varies around 70% for young people from 18 to 27, the lack of hope for the future and the role of the radical imams educated in Arabic states.

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[13] La chronique de Pascal Davidovicz: Les Balkans Carrefour de la terreur djihadiste, Trbun juive,www.tribunejuive.info,feujword, 26.01.2016.
[14] Ibid.

Their main target are the young people from high schools and up to 25 years of age, and their strongest weapon are the large sums of money, the nationalist radical programs and the strong propaganda by ISIS. This is multiplied by the recent memories and emotions from the interethnic conflicts and the almost Huntington-like Manichean propagandist vision of the Balkans for the *blood-thirst of one side and the innocence of the other. At the same time, each ethnicity sees themselves as a sort of victim,* referring to Jasenovac, Srebrenica, and Ratchak …

4. According to researchers from Kings College in London, more than 600 jihadists from the Balkans have been estimated to participate in warfare as members of ISIS in 2015. According to the estimates of the Macedonian security services, 110 were from the republic of Macedonia and roughly 80 returned to the country in 2016.[15] That same year, 120 jihadists returned to Kosovo. Are they turning into *clockwork bombs?* In June of 2015, Balkan jihadists called for a "holy war" in the Balkans from the Middle East. "We will poison and kill Christians, we will conquer Christian lands in the name of Allah!" Bosnian jihadist Abu Dzihad threatened from Syria via a recording on the official ISIS channel "Al Hyat". In September of 2016, the psalmists again sent a threat via the ISIS magazine *Dabiq-What is to stop us from attacking the embassies of Japan in Bosnia, Malaysia and Indonesia?*

According to FBI Director James Comey, after the defeat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, a *new terrorist Diaspora* of militants which would disperse around the world in order to undertake various forms of asymmetrical attacks is coming up.[16] Taking into consideration that the caliphate system is in a stage of dissolvent, ISIS has a need to globalize its own raison d'Etre, hence the logic of spreading asymmetrical attacks on Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, the Balkans, Turkey, USA and European and international capitals.

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[15] Koj gi kontrolira povratnicite od Sirija/Makedonija/DW.COM,24.03.2016.
[16] Virginie Robert-La crente d'une diaspora terroriste grandit avec les revers militaries de l'Etat islamique, Virginie Robert://www. LESECHOS,FR/JOURNALISTES/ IN-DEX, PHP/ID=114, 18.07.2016.

According to IHS (global informative company) estimates, the intensifying of the attacks of the antiterrorist forces resulted in a decrease of the territory under ISIS's control to roughly 60,000 km². At the same time, the profit from oil smuggling fell from 80 million dollars to 50 million. According to CIA Director *Joh Brennan,* the number of jihadists has also decreased significantly to 18,000 militants in Syria and Iraq. In those circumstances, ISIS's interventions seem more like guerrilla actions than serious classical armed clashes as was the case before, feels Columb Strack, HIS analyst.[17]

NATO and the Fourth Generation of Armed Challenges

Faced with the new security challenges, after the collapse of communism in 1989 and the fall of the Soviet Union, the Alliance underwent a series of transformations both internally and externally in order to adapt to the new security architecture of Europe more successfully.

As early as the Washington treaty in 1949, it stated that the "fundamental goal of the Alliance is to preserve the freedom and the peace of all member states by way of using political and military means according to the UN Charter".[18] The global framework for the role of the Alliance in the entire doctrine of NATO from its establishment up until today are paid out in the six strategic concepts of the Alliance and the numerous closing communiqués of the summits, the mutual declarations of the NAC in various formats, statements, reports, decisions and actions. At the Rome 199 summit, for the first time after the end of the Cold War the fourth New Strategic Concept (NSC) was adopted, characterized by a global approach to the security architecture of Europe. According to the new spirit of the time, *the NATO forces adapted to the new strategic concept.* The document points out that *the Alliance should count on the diversification of the risks of the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, an end to the flows of basic resources, act of terrorism and sabotage.[19]*

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Manuel de l'OTAN, januari 1993, Bureau de l'information et de la presse, Bruxelles.

[19] New strategic concept, Rome, 1991.

The development of the dialogue and the cooperation with the new partners which came out of the former communist regimes represent an integral part of the strategic concept of NATO. On 24 February 1994, the NATO aviation brought down 4 fighter jets of the Yugoslav army. In doing so, it carries out the first armed engagement of the Alliance since its establishment. At the summit in Brussels in 1994, NATO stressed its preparedness to undertake military operations for the removal of the heavy artillery surrounding Sarajevo under the auspices of the UN Security Council and in accordance with Resolution no. 958 of the Security Council of the United Nations. In this way, the Alliance intervened outside of the region of its member-states, a rule envisaged in the founding document of the summit in Washington in 1949. Still, the first mass intervention of the Alliance outside of the zone covered by its members was registered with the airstrikes on SR Yugoslavia in February of 1999.

At the 1999 summit in Washington, the strategic concept of the alliance underwent a revision. With the modifications, NATO undertakes to *secure mutual defense, but to also guarantee peace and stability of the entire euro-Atlantic space.* Hand in hand with this document, the alliance carried out a wider approach to security, including *political, economic, social and ecological means.*[20]

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on New York and Washington, the alliance activated Article 5 employing all allies in the war on terrorism for the first time in its history. At the USA's request, the alliance undertook eight measures of specific support, such as guarding the American airspace, the Eagle Assite operation, the naval operation in the Mediterranean for intelligence and wiretapping titled Active Endeavour, the operation ISAF/FIAS – International forces for assistance and security in Afghanistan, as a first peace operation outside of Europe the command of which was taken by NATO in 2003.

At the Prague summit in 2002, the Military concept of terrorist defense was prepared. This document stipulates that the:

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[20] MANUEL-NATO,2006, ISBN 92-845-0179-2, HB-FRE-0406, Division Diplomatie politique, OTAN, Bruxelles, p. 19.

"Alliance is prepared to assist in dodging and disorganization of terrorist attacks and threats from outside...against the population, the territory, the infrastructure and the forces of any state which is a member of NATO…"[21]

At the same time, NATO and its partner countries prepared an Action plan for Partnership against terrorism, as well as antiterrorist activities against Al Qaeda remnants in the Balkans.

At the summit in Istanbul in 2004, the alliance built a strategy of mutual strengthened measures in the war on terrorism, such as: *international cooperation in the field of intelligence between NATO member states, quick reaction in case of terrorist attacks, contribution to securing public places, airports, sea ports, disabling artificial explosive devices in car bombs, airplanes, cyber- defense against cyber attacks and a more successful protection against the perturbation of critical infrastructures on a national level, systems of information and communication.* Same goes for the improvement of the *Plans for civil protection,* in accordance with the lessons learned from the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001.

It can be concluded that the complete transformation of the alliance both internally and externally was made in favor of adapting to the new threats from the fourth generation of wars. Adding to this are *the general policy of NATO and the technology of adopting decisions, the adaptation of civilian and military structures of the alliance, the operations aimed at maintaining peace, opening up to new member states, partnership and cooperation, EU-NATO relations, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Mediterranean dialogue, NATO-Russia, NATO-Ukraine, the strategic partnership with Australia and Japan etc.*

At the Lisbon summit in 2010, the alliance adopted the last *New strategic concept* pointing out that the *collective defense, the crisis management and the co operational security* remain the main pillars of the NATO philosophy. At the summit in Chicago in 2012, NATO confirmed the necessity to finish the anti-missile shield and declares that *it is not aimed at Russia and its strategic defense system, but towards the threats of outside euro-Atlantic zones.* At the summit in Wales in Newport in 2014, the alliance took a series of measures for the strengthening of the collective defense, the development of the armed ca-

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[21]   MANUEL, Ibid. 194.

pacities of NATO, *the modernization of the NATO forces on the 2020 horizon in order to tackle the threats from the hybrid wars, within which a broad spectrum of military, paramilitary and civilian measures, more or less obscured, are imposed in an integrated way.*

At the last summit in Warsaw in 2016, NATO expressed concern regarding the annex of the Crimea by Russia, the crisis in the eastern part of the Ukraine, the crisis and the instability in the Middle East and North Africa caused both by ISIS and by the government forces of Bashar al-Assad. In the closing communiqué it was concluded that *the alliance is faced with security challenged and threats from both the east and the south, by state and non-state acts, by armed forces, terrorist, cyber and hybrid attacks.* The document states that the *instability is spreading through the whole region of the Middle East and Northern Africa, especially in Syria, Iraq and Libya, while the terrorism and extremism have a direct influence on NATO security.* With regard to the terrorists threats by ISIS, NATO contributes with its participation in the international coalition against ISIS, is the conclusion in the Warsaw summit communiqué. At the previous summit in Wales, the Action plan for <u>reactivation</u> (RAP) was confirmed, while at the summit in Warsaw it was concluded that this type of *swift reaction for response to key changes which are happening in the security environment around NATO borders. This plan is the response to challenges created by Russia, but also the Mediterranean, the middle east and northern Africa.*

Conclusion

We live in an era of the phenomenon of *new wars,* which on one hand are characterized by numerous modified elements in relation to the classic armed clashes, and on the other they represent a very wide and fluid category. The analyses show that the new wars are a new reality of the modern international relations. The Balkans are not spared from these threats too.

As part of *the new wars or the fourth generation of armed clashes, we have the hybrid and irregular armed clashes. As for their nature, the analysis are divided in their opinions. The majority feel* that it is necessary to separate the hybrid warfare from the classical bins of conventional or irregular war. The represent a sort of a *mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism and criminal behavior in the same time and battle space to obtain (a group's) political objectives.*

The essential mission of the alliance is the vigilance over the safety of the euro-Atlantic space, as well as the strengthening of the collective defense and the managing of the vectors of instability such as new wars, hybrid warfare, irregular war, conventional wars, and terrorism.

NATO remains an alliance of values, among which freedom, human rights, democracy and the rule of law are essential, are shared by all its members and shape the identity and action of NATO. Their greater integration in all domains of activity makes NATO stronger.

The new wars, the wars of the fourth generation try to question all these values and therefore the message sent by NATO from the last summit in Warsaw is understandable: <u>An essential Alliance in a more dangerous world.</u> In today's dangerous world, transatlantic cooperation is needed more than ever. NATO embodies that cooperation, bringing to bear the strength and unity of North America and Europe.

Intraregional Security Co-operation in the Western Balkans – Chances and Impediments

Robert Barić

What are the prospects for regional security cooperation in the Western Balkans now and in the future? There is a clear need for the continuation of development of the intraregional security cooperation in the region. Despite many efforts, most states in the region still have an unstable political and economic situation, corruption problems and undeveloped government institutions which are unable to cope with the above mentioned problems. Those problems are strengthened by the effects of "spill-over" of the external crises in the region – from the economic crisis in the EU up to the consequences of the current geopolitical clash between Russia and the West. Cumulative result of those effects is the possibility for the continuation of the prolonged economic problems, followed by further political destabilisation and radicalization of the countries in the region.

Despite the positive results achieved in the attempts to stabilize the region, there still persist serious political and security problems in the Western Balkans. Those challenges are a mixture of the problems inherited from the past and challenges created as a result of the 2008 global economic crises:

- Negative heritage of the dissolution of former Yugoslavia and subsequent wars in Croatia (1991-1995), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) and Kosovo (1999).
- Still-present unresolved problems of interstate borders and status of minorities in the states of the region.
- Insufficiently developed democratic political and economic systems of the states in the region, as a result of the unfinished political and economic transitions.
- Constantly growing security threats to regional security and stability: persistence of the non-military threats (bad governance; corruption; organized crime; illegal trafficking in arms, drugs, human beings; SALW proliferation; terrorism threat), but also still low but growing possibility of military inter-state conflicts in case of further political

and economic destabilization of the region.
- The newest threat from 2015 onwards is the waves of refugees and displaced people from Middle East.

In resolving the mentioned threats and challenges, further development of regional security cooperation in the Western Balkans is of paramount importance.

Regional security cooperation is also one of the criteria for EU and NATO membership. For the EU, regional cooperation is one of the crucial factors in achieving sustainable stabilization of the Western Balkans. Based on the examples of cooperation of the Višegrad group and the Baltic countries, the EU considers building close regional ties and trust between countries of the region as the best way to overcome a negative legacy of their ethnic disputes and past armed conflicts. In that regard, the need to establish permanent conditions for security, stability and development have been a major incentive for regional security cooperation development.

Although numerous problems still exist, it is a fact that the Western Balkan countries have made significant progress in improving regional security. The development of regional cooperation on hard security issues created a number of standing initiatives which promote security cooperation.[1]

The second example is the development of institutional mechanisms for regional cooperation on soft security issues.[2] The Western Balkan countries also signed bilateral agreements on police cooperation. Serbia and Kosovo

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[1] These are the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC), the Regional Secretariat of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI), South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), South East Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM), US-Adriatic Charter A5 and the South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse (SEEC).

[2] These are: the South East European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC), Southeast European Prosecutors Advisory Group (SEEPAG), Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI) and the Migration, Asylum, Refugees, Regional Initiative Center (MARRI).

despite their differences also established police cooperation.[3] Further successes in the fight against organized crime, political extremism and radical structures are essential in achieving long term security and stability of the region.

What are the obstacles for the further development of regional security cooperation? In the first place is poisoned legacy of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, which influences events in the region even today. A second obstacle are the underdeveloped security institutions of the countries in the region. Despite significant efforts invested in the security sector reform in the region, significant problems are still present. A third obstacle is the problem of unfinished political and economic transition of the countries of the region.

During the last two decades a mixture of the mentioned challenges has created a constant need of the countries in the region for strong external influence in making political, economic and security changes necessary for their long-term stabilization and consequently stabilization of the whole region. This is simultaneously a great help but also a great weakness. It helps them to create necessary preconditions for reforms, but creates dependence on outside help.

A second problem is in fact that willingness of the countries in the region to follow external influence is based on expected rewards – future membership in the Euro-Atlantic institutions (EU and NATO). Simply put, regional cooperation is seen only as an instrument for joining EU and NATO, not as an instrument for achieving lasting reconciliation between former opponents. But, if assurance of future membership in one or both Euro-Atlantic institutions is missing, even external influence is not enough to sustain the necessary reforms.

Finally, the newest challenge which has growing influence on the regional security cooperation is geopolitical competition in the region.

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[3] See: Kursani, Shpend "Police cooperation between Kosovo and Serbia", Belgrade Centre for Security Policy and Kosovar Center for Security Studies, Belgrade and Prishtina 2015.

External Factor – the Role of the NATO and EU

In resolving the complex security risks and threats the countries of the region are forced to rely on outside help. The role of external influence as a catalyst for changes, including security changes, has been a feature of the Western Balkan politics from mid-1990. The goal of the Western governmental and non-governmental subjects has been the development of regional cooperation as a means to stabilize South East Europe. In those efforts the main instrument for development of the regional cooperation has been a policy of incentives – promise and prospect of future membership in the NATO and EU.

In the beginning of external efforts directed towards the stabilization of the region, the emphasis was on resolving hard security issues with the goal of preventing a possible future conflict in the Western Balkans. The focus was on the normalisation of the relations between the countries, especially those involved in the 1990s conflicts, and closing (but not permanently resolving) the crucial open issues. International efforts were directed towards the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries in the region, enabling cross-border movement for people and goods and resolving border disputes.

In international efforts made from mid-1990 up to the beginning of 2000s NATO had primacy. The implementation of military aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement resulted in the NATO takeover of military operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) from UNPROFOR. Afterwards NATO remained in BiH in the role of deterring possible future hostilities and stabilising the peace by providing an international military presence in BiH. In June 1999, NATO started a peace-support operation in Kosovo tasked with a goal to deter renewed hostilities, establish a secure environment in Kosovo and to ensure public safety and order. Today, the NATO focus in the Western Balkans is cooperation with international organisations active in the region.[4]

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[4]   See: Watkins, Amadeo. 2010. NATO and the Balkans. In: *NATO at 60: The Post-Cold War Enlargement and the Alliance's Future*, ed. Anton Bebler. Amsterdam: IOS Press, pp. 99-104.

During most of the 1990s, the EU has been side-lined on the Balkans. That was the result of the EU's foreign policy failure to prevent and stop wars in the former Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990s. The situation changed at the beginning of the previous decade, when the EU became a leader in all areas of regional cooperation development including security issues. Ironically, NATO's success in preventing further violence at the end diminished its role in stabilizing the Western Balkans: instead of armed confrontation countries of the region turned their efforts towards political and economic transition required for the prospect of future EU membership.

In 2000, the EU finally made a strategic decision to proclaim the countries of the region as potential candidates for membership. The essence of the new strategy was encouragement of regional co-operation with the goal of gradual sectoral integration into the EU.

The first EU attempt of fostering regional cooperation was the not so successful Stability Pact initiative. The Stability Pact has been first supplemented and then completely replaced by the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA). The main goal of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) mechanism is the fulfilment of criteria for the EU membership by the specific candidate country. One of the important parts of membership criteria has been the readiness of the candidate country for the development of regional cooperation.

In the area of security the SAP agreements were focused on combatting soft security threats. Naturally, the emphasis was on the justice and home affairs cooperation. Hard security issues (which lost most of their importance they had in the 1990s) were left to NATO. The EU freedom of action has increased when at the beginning of 2000s the US started shifting responsibility of the Western Balkan security to the Union.

The European Union takeover of NATO's peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2004 and the US decision to significantly reduce its military presence in Kosovo after 2008 clearly indicated Washington's disengagement from the region, caused by focusing US strategic priorities from Europe towards the Asia-Pacific region. As a result the influence of the US over political developments in the Western Balkans has diminished, while the involvement of the European Union has grown.

Strong reliance on the external powers as the guarantors of stability in the region (US/NATO, EU) created a significant problem. Instead of trying to find comprehensive solutions for the problems created by the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, the countries of the region relied more and more on external influences, guidance and help. Efforts were directed towards the development of different aspects of regional cooperation. Those efforts were motivated by the desire to formally fulfil the criteria for the EU and NATO membership.[5]

As a result of this approach, countries in the region did not try to adopt and achieve the substance of the EU's membership standards. They were motivated only to go through the compliance with the technical demands of accession. Key unresolved issues in their relations[6] were pushed aside without any attempt to find permanent solutions and prevent possible resurgence of conflicts in the future. Open issues like the Croatian-Serbian relations in the region, future organisation of the state Bosnia and Herzegovina, the status of Kosovo and the "Macedonian question" are still unresolved. Each country of the region still retains its divergent interests and security agendas, instead of trying to find some kind of compromises for a shared strategic vision for ensuring long term regional stability and security. On the surface, it seemed as if regional cooperation would work; in reality, deep differences and obstacles still existed. Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans has been developed to the extent that it remained focused towards a shared common goal (EU and/or NATO membership).[7] It did not involve unresolved issues from the past. Inter-state cooperation has remained extremely limited in those areas.

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[5] See: Anastasakis, Othon, EU policy of regional cooperation in South East Europe: The creation of a virtual reality, *Fornet: CFSP Forum*, 3(2) (2005), pp.10-12.

[6] Consequences of unsuccessful evolution of former Yugoslavia toward a more flexible federation which created her dissolution: mistrust and hostility between populations created during regional wars in 1990s; open border issues; status of minorities; issues connected with still unresolved former Yugoslavia succession process.

[7] For example, the Western Balkans governments have taken part in security cooperation in SEDM and SEEBRIG framework with primary motivation to strengthen links with NATO and the US and to meet conditions for membership in NATO (Bechev, 2011, pp.127-128).

In the region functional cooperation was developed in fighting transnational crime, in regard to illegal trafficking and migrations, counter-terrorism, border security issues and the involvement of the Western Balkan countries in the NATO and EU led operations. But the establishment, agenda-setting, institutional design and resourcing policy of regional cooperation initiatives were driven by outside actors such as NATO, the US and the EU, not by countries of the region.[8]

The US played a critical role in promoting multilateral political-military cooperation from the mid-1990s. Later, the EU was the principal reason for multilateral structures to emerge in the policy area of justice and home affairs, with a goal of combatting soft security threats. In emphasis on soft-security issues the EU has been guided by the preferences of its institutions and its individual member states.

As a result, the EU has become the security provider in the Western Balkans offering integration, the region builder and arbiter who is setting the rules for all countries aspiring to achieve Union membership. Such a role requires strong leadership and unwavering leader's support for their membership if the countries of the region fulfil the necessary membership criteria.

The problem lies in the fact that such a leadership and commitment are lacking. After grandiose plans for the Western Balkans in the first half of the 2000s, first cracks in the EU resolve started to show after the big EU enlargement in 2004. In 2008, the EU financial crisis (which soon became economic and now a full political crisis of the Union), stopped plans for the further EU enlargement.

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[8]   See: - Dreiack, Stefanie. 2016. "The Western Balkans Inside, Outside and Between the European Union: About the Nexus between Regional Cooperation, European Integration and Security Sector Reforms" In *European Neighbourhood Policy: Geopolitics Between Integration and Security*, eds. Bettina Bruns, Dorit Happ and Helga Zichner. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 194-196. Bechev, Dimitar. 2011. *Constructing South East Europe: The Politics of Balkan Regional Cooperation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 108-128.

The events in the last fourteen years showed two key problems in the EU approach towards the Western Balkans. First, the inadequacy of the traditional EU integration model, and second uncertain membership prospects of the Western Balkans countries.

EU and the Western Balkans

The EU failed with its attempts to stop the wars of Yugoslav dissolution between 1990 and 1992. It took the EU institutions a relatively long time to elaborate and agree on the policy towards the region. The final decision on the EU regional approach was made in 1997 by choosing conditionality as the basis of the EU strategy and establishing regional co-operation as an aim of the strategy. This approach was endorsed at the Thessaloniki summit (2003) which confirmed the status of all the Western Balkans countries as potential candidates for the membership in the EU.[9]

The first attempt at creating a mechanism for fostering regional cooperation was the Stability Pact initiative (1999-2008). The Stability Pact was established as an institution aimed to strengthen peace, democracy, human rights and economic development in the countries of South Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, its programs were limited only to encourage transformational processes in the region. Instead of financing and guiding programs aimed at strengthening regional cooperation, the Stability Pact has been limited to the role of coordination and mediation.

From the start, the Stability Pact created discrepancy of expectations. Countries of the region were expecting some kind of new Marshall Plan with a goal of channelling financial help from the West to the region. In their perspective this was necessary to allow rapid reconstruction of the region after wars and clashes in the 1990s.

But for the EU the Stability Pact was a learning mechanism tasked with the development of new areas and means of regional cooperation. This new experience was supposed to be feeding back into the EU integration pro-

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[9] "EU-Western Balkans Summit Thessaloniki, 21 June 2003 Declaration," C/03/163, Thessaloniki, 21 June 2003.

cess, bringing countries of the region in line with the main EU policies and priorities. Bruxelles expected that a result would be the Western Balkans countries' acceptance of the fact that regional cooperation is an essential need of the region. A final step was supposed to be the transfer of cooperation ownership to the region. This fundamental difference of opinion resulted in widespread frustration on both sides.

Parallel with the Stability Pact in June 1999, the EU created another mechanism for fostering regional cooperation with the ultimate goal of eventual Union membership. That was the SAP, today the main instrument for the Western Balkan countries to attain EU membership.[10] The SAP is based on the bilateral SAAs concluded between the EU and the candidate for membership. The SAP defines key areas for the political and economic transformation of the candidate country, and especially encourages regional cooperation. As such, the SAP is a political framework which for each candidate country defines criteria and conditions for the EU membership.

The SAP represents the Union's policy of the equal opportunities to the countries of the region. In evaluation of the accession process the EU uses the same criteria for each candidate country. Each country needs to fulfil the same set of accession criteria (Copenhagen criteria). The European Commission (EC) will formulate the pre-accession process on the basis of political, economic and social conditions in each candidate country. If necessary, the EC will help candidate country in making necessary political and economic reforms using the pre-accession funds. Using modified IPA II mechanism from 2014 onwards the EC is trying to tailor necessary political and structural economic reforms on the basis of the specific situation in each candidate country.

In theory, the described approach ensures impartiality and equal membership chances for each candidate country in the Western Balkans. Unfortu-

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[10] For analysis of positive and negative characteristics of the SAP see: Phinnemore, David. 2013 "The Stabilization and Association Process: a framework for European Union enlargement?" In European Integration and Transformation in the Western Balkans: Europeanization or business as usual?, ed. Arolda Elbasani. London: Routledge, pp. 22-35.

nately, in practice even modified IPA II mechanism cannot erase the fact of great differences in political, economic and social development between the Western Balkan countries. Glaring individual differences in the development of their political institutions and economic systems opened a question to which the EU still does not have an answer: how to treat countries that are at substantially different development levels and consequently at different pre-accession stages equally. The EU attempt of fostering a flexible approach by allowing each country to meet accession standards at its own pace (differentiated integration policy) was inconsistent and did not bring the expected results.[11]

The situation is additionally complicated by the weak statehood of the countries in the region. The result is often lack of capacity and will to reform in the candidate states. Those facts are putting in question "one fits all" approach to the EU enlargement. In the Western Balkans, as a part of the accession process we have a transition from communism to democracy and at the same time a transition of countries with ethnically divided post-conflict societies, underdeveloped economies and limited statehood capabilities. For these reasons the same approach produced different and divergent results.

Ironically, in mentioned conditions the EU accession help is most beneficial for more advanced candidate states. This was evident in the case of Croatia (example of consolidated statehood), who signed the SAA agreement in 2001 and became a member in 2013. On the opposite side are the examples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo – countries characterized by unfinished processes of state-building. The result is competition between countries which is degrading the Union's efforts for development of regional cooperation and development of enmity towards the EU in the region.

Structural constraints of the Western Balkan countries require a different, more committed and focused approach. The EU needs to be directly in-

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[11] See: Economides, Spyros. 2010. Balkan Europe In Which Europe? The Politics of Differentiated Integration, eds. Kenneth Dyson and Angelos Sepos. London, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 112-125.

volved in the state-building process (*hands-on-approach*) instead of having a role of external facilitator.[12]

This puts in focus the model of the European integration and its applicability in the Western Balkans. The SAP process is based on the experience of the Western European integration after the Second World War. This model of political and economic integration was created with a goal of resolving the security dilemma in Western Europe (prevention of future conflict between France and Germany). Its essence is the creation of political and economic inter-dependency between Western European countries, with the intent of preventing intra-European wars.

The result was the creation of the Transatlantic/Western European security community based on two integration mechanisms – the NATO as a framework for hard security (collective defence) and the European Coal and Steel Union (forerunner of today's European Union) as a supranational framework for economic integration (creation of a single Western European market). The described integration model has been successfully applied and gradually extended to the other parts of Europe during the European Community/European Union expansion in the 1970s (Denmark and UK), 1980s (Spain and Portugal), 1990s (Austria, Ireland, Sweden, Finland) and in the "Big Bang" engagement in 2004 (10 Baltic, Central European, South-East European and Mediterranean countries).

The essence of the EU integration model is the integration of countries who achieved a similar level of the political, economic and social development. The creation of the ECSC in 1951 was based on a premise that cooperation between the six Western European countries in coal and steel production would gradually lead to cooperation and integration first in economic and then in other areas. The same integration logic was exported to the Western Balkans countries: a spill-over effect created by the cooperation in economic area (infrastructure, free trade, transport, energy) could

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[12] See: Bieber, Florian, Building Impossible States? State-Building Strategies and EU Membership in the Western Balkans, Europe-Asia Studies, 63(10) (2011), pp. 1783-1802.

lead to further cooperation in a broader range of areas, and finally to regional stability, reconciliation and the EU membership.

But limitations of the integration model started to appear with the EU enlargement in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), attempts to implement the same model in the area of Wider Europe (unsatisfactory results of the European Neighbourhood Policy from 2004 onwards) and in the Western Balkans.

Let us summarize specific conditions in the Western Balkans:

1. Most of the Western Balkan countries have underdeveloped state institutions.
2. In comparison with the Central European countries, political and economic transition is more complex.
3. Countries of the region have underdeveloped and weakly connected economies.
4. Poisonous legacy of violent dissolution of former Yugoslavia.
5. Big political, economic, social and cultural differences between the Western Balkan countries.

In the described circumstances the traditional model of integration is insufficient. In the Western Balkans the EU enlargement is more challenging and lengthy than previous enlargement in Central and Eastern Europe. Limited capacity of the region's states means that the Union cannot just set conditions, provide reform templates, provide financial and technical incentives and monitor fulfilment of the accession criteria.

What is needed is a direct and comprehensive EU involvement in the state-building process of the candidate countries. Up to now, the EU has focused its efforts towards economic reconstruction and infrastructure building, and development of all aspects of regional cooperation. Positive influence created by economic growth and peaceful cooperation between countries in the region should enable political and economic stabilization of the Western Balkans.

This rosy scenario neglected one missing ingredient: developed political structure (established parliamentary democracy, rule of law, accountability of public sector, developed consociationalism as a basis for cooperation in

deeply divided societies). In the integration of the Western Europe after the Second World War and the Post-Cold War enlargement of the Union the necessary political structure was more or less in place. In the Western Balkans the necessary political infrastructure is at best rudimentary, and without combination of more direct involvement and strong external incentives provided primarily by the EU, countries of the region do not have the will or capacity to ensure the implementation of necessary reforms themselves.

Unfortunately, at this moment the EU is unable to assure countries of the Western Balkans that the strongest incentive for reforms – a clear promise of future Union membership – is still on the table.

After the big enlargement in 2004, followed by two smaller rounds of enlargement (Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, Croatia in 2013), the EU does not have any concrete plans for further expansion, including expansion in the Western Balkans. This "enlargement fatigue" was visible between 2004 and 2007.

At the European Council meeting in Salzburg (2006) the need for consolidation of the EU before the next round of enlargement was emphasized. This conclusion was adopted in the enlargement strategy for 2006-2007 adopted by the EC.[13]

The Berlin declaration adopted at the 50th anniversary of the EU (2007) did not mention any plan for future enlargement of the Union.[14]

The financial crisis of the EU which started in 2008 has opened a process of rethinking not only the current organization and goals of the Union, but also the content of the European integration (the still unresolved dilemma between intergovernmental and supranational EU). Only when those fundamental questions are resolved, further EU enlargement will be possible.

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[13] Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council (15/16 June 2006)" Council of the European Union, 10633/1/06 REV 1, Brussels, 17 July 2006. p.18.

[14] See: Declaration on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome, Berlin, 25 March 2007.

In July 2014, Jean-Claude Juncker, newly elected President of the EU Commission, said that in the next five years there would be no new enlargement.[15]

The EU meeting on the Western Balkans in Berlin (2014) and the EU meetings in Vienna (2015) and Paris (2016) gave only rhetorical assurances regarding future enlargement of the Union.[16]

All those events are putting in question the EU's capacity to fulfil its promise towards the Western Balkan countries aspiring to join the Union. At the moment, the Western Balkan countries do not really know what to expect

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[15] Jean-Claude Juncker, A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change – Political Guidelines for the next European Commission, Opening Statement in the European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg, 15 July 2014.

[16] At the Berlin conference on the Western Balkans initiated by Germany (2014) the Berlin Process was started. The first goal of the meeting was to show the EU commitment for future enlargement in the Western Balkans through revitalization of ties between the Western Balkans and selected EU member states. Furthermore the meeting was aimed at improving regional cooperation in the Western Balkans in the areas of infrastructural and economic development. The next meeting, the second Western Balkans Summit in Vienna (2015), launched a new regional policy initiative (the Connectivity Agenda), a wide effort of modernization and integration of the region's economic and transportation infrastructure. Unfortunately the third Western Balkans Summit in Paris (2016) failed to live up to expectations raised during the previous meetings. Even the EU's officials admitted insufficiency of the efforts and disappointing results. The EU is again trying to implement its traditional approach to the European integration. Countries of the Western Balkans are supposed to be responsible for implementing agenda's goals (a number of reforms up to 2018). As before, the role of Bruxelles would be limited to the assistance in the development of proposed initiatives. This means that insufficient governance capabilities, weak economies and the unwillingness of the countries of the region to put aside their interests and cooperate will doom the Connectivity Agenda to same fate as many previous futile policy initiatives. The EU critics are right in castigating unwillingness of the Western Balkan countries for implementing the necessary reforms. But their solutions (for example, threatened future of the Western support for the region or state so that the integration perspective will not remain open indefinitely) will not work if the EU is not directly involved in the state-building. It is not realistic to expect that the Western Balkan countries will overcome the sources of internal instability entirely by their own efforts. Instead of trying to develop network governance in the region the EU should be primarily focused on effective state-building in the region (see: Taylor, 2013).

from the Union. For them, the last ten years can be described as a lost decade for the region.

The slowing EU expansion and a lack of readiness to receive new members in the near future in the Western Balkan countries are undermining the will for reforms. This will also have negative consequences for further development of regional security.

Growing uncertainty about the future EU membership is strengthened by the slow, confused and fractured EU response to the migrant crisis in 2015-2016. For political elites and populations in the Western Balkan countries those are the signs of an unclear Euro-Atlantic integration perspective.

Renewal of Geopolitical Confrontation in the Western Balkans

The second challenge to regional security cooperation is the renewal of the big powers' geopolitical rivalry in the region.

The geopolitical instability in the Balkans has deep historical origins. The result of centuries of conquests and migrations is the creation of the unique and heterogonous mixture of peoples, ethnic groups and different religions in the Balkans. From the weakening and then dissolution of the Ottoman Empire up to the beginning of the Cold War, the Balkan was an area of intense geopolitical confrontation of great European powers. Ironically, during the better part of Cold War, the Balkans enjoyed geopolitical stability.

The end of the Cold War did not revive big power rivalry in the Balkans. Despite her intention to keep Balkan countries (and other former soviet satellite states in the Central Europe) out of NATO, Russia has been too weak to prevent NATO enlargement. With greatly reduced Russian influence and the disappearance of Chinese influence in Albania, the entire region has become oriented towards the West. The extra-regional sources of influence in the Balkans have been greatly reduced. This was evident in Iranian's unsuccessful attempt to get a foothold in Bosnia and Herzegovina by providing military assistance to Sarajevo between 1992 and 1995. But after the signature of the Dayton peace agreement Sarajevo distanced itself from Iran and moved closer to the US and the EU.

Recent regional uncertainties about the future of the EU and prospects for membership, and EU inductiveness to act are creating a power vacuum into which other actors (Russia, Turkey and some other Middle East countries, China) are inserting themselves. If the EU does not take decisive steps, its influence in the Western Balkans will be undermined.

Russia. The ongoing Russian geopolitical confrontation with the West is centred on Ukraine with the goal of rolling back Western influence from the perceived Russian sphere of influence (area of the former Soviet Union). Despite the fact that at the moment confrontation is focused on the fate of Ukraine and Russian intervention in Syria (with possible growth of Russian influence in Libya), South-Eastern Europe and especially the Western Balkans are also in Moscow's sights.

Traditionally, Russia has always maintained a presence in South-Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. In the post-Cold War period Moscow is trying to renew its presence in the region using energy and financial instruments. Up to the Ukrainian crisis, those efforts did not mean to stop EU enlargement in the region. But now the traditional goal of influencing EU members in the region to adopt pro-Russian positions is supplemented by attempts to challenge the EU and NATO perspective for the remaining Western Balkans countries which are still outside both organizations. For Russia, the current situation in the region is creating a possibility of setting off a political and/or economic crisis in one or more states in the region with a goal to force the EU members to turn their attention from Ukraine to the new instability in the Western Balkans.[17]

Turkey and the Arab Gulf countries. For Turkey, the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia have opened a door to reasserting the Turkish influence in the Western Balkans. From the start of

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[17] For the Russian policy towards the region see: Barić, Robert. 2015. Contemporary European Security Environment – Emerging Trends and Perspectives: the Ukraine Conflict, Its Impact on Relations Between the West and Russia and the Consequences of the Conflict for Southeast Europe. In: Croatia in Contemporary Security Environment – Threats, Challenges and Responses, eds. Sandro Knezović and Senada Šelo Šabić. Zagreb: Institute for Development and International Relations and Center for Defence and Strategic Studies "Janko Bobetko", pp. 15-26.

the 1990s Ankara has developed relations with countries of the region with significant Muslim population (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania), using a combination of trade, economic support and development of cultural and religious projects. Established networks of Turkish religious and cultural institutions have significant influence on the population in many parts of the Western Balkans. In establishing its presence in the region Turkey has contributed to the overall efforts in fostering stability in the region.

On the other hand, Turkey has recently become more assertive in promoting her interests in the Western Balkans. If in its future development Turkey would tend toward anti-Western orientation and Islamization, it could bring increasing levels of uncertainties to the Western Balkans. At the moment, it is evident that Turkey's relations with the EU are on a downhill trajectory. The continuation of this trend creates a situation that one of the strongest incentives for a cooperative Turkish behaviour in the Western Balkans – a promise of the future Turkey membership in the EU – could be removed. If this is the case, Turkey would mind its own geopolitical priorities and try to become an alternative to the EU.

This could have a serious negative effect on the Western Balkan's stability. Although Turkey does not have (at least for now) the same leverage as the EU in the region, it could significantly hamper the EU interests and in certain Western Balkans countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia) try to foster Euroscepticism in the Muslim population.[18]

The Gulf Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE) are also trying to increase their influence in the Western Balkans created during the wars in the 1990s, based on protection and support of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. During the last two decades the Saudis have been funding the establishment of numerous mosques and Muslim

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[18] For Turkey policy towards the Western Balkans and the EU, see: Dursun-Özkanca, Oya, Turkey and the European Union: Strategic Partners or Competitors in the Western Balkans?, Journal of Regional Security, 11(1) (2016), pp.33–54.

charities,[19] creating hubs for the spread of a conservative Salafi version of Islam (and undermine influence of a tolerant kind of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia, developed during the Ottomans rule).[20] This is creating divisions among Muslim communities of the Western Balkans, radicalization of local Muslim population and perspective of militant Islam's rise in the region in the future.[21] There is also a significant economic investment of the Gulf States in the region (for example, UAE investment in Serbia).

The Gulf Arab states' involvement in the region is primarily motivated by their geopolitical rivalry. In trying to attain geopolitical and economic influence in the Western Balkans, they are replaying their old rivalries in the region (for example UAE against Qatar and Turkey). Projection of the Arab Gulf states rivalries and interests, using small and weak states in the Western Balkans as pawns is endangering their political and economic stability and also stability of the whole region.[22] Their activities have raised trepidations in Brussels concerning membership requirements compliance by the candidate countries and spread of radical Islamist sentiments in the region.

China. The Chinese interest in the Western Balkans is motivated by creating a bridgehead in countries that are members of the EU or have a perspective of joining in the future. Their strategy is focused towards creating a deeper economic and political cooperation with a long term goal of increasing Chinese leverage in the EU. Through development of regional partnerships Beijing is trying to directly influence policies of the countries

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[19] Muslim charities are taking advantage of serious economic situation (high levels of unemployment) and failure of local governments to improve living conditions. Their work is now expanded - they started to provide public services in communities ranging from helping the poor to supporting hospitals, nurseries and schools.

[20] Religious tolerance developed during the Ottomans rule was based on the guaranteeing the non-Muslims religious freedom and security of their properties as long as they fulfilled their duties to the government.

[21] Petrović, Predrag, Islamic radicalism in the Balkans, European Union Institute for Security Studies Issue Alert 24, June 2016.

[22] Boduszyński, Mieczysław P., The Gulf and the Balkans: Islam, Investment, and Influence, Gulf State Analytics Monthly Monitor (January 2015), pp.5-8.

in the region and create a relation of dependency with countries expected to join the EU in the next 10 to 20 years. The region also has a great potential as a destination for Chinese exports and investments in the financial, telecommunication, energy and transport infrastructure.[23]

At the moment, Chinese presence is strongest in Serbia (Beijing views Serbia as a strategic partner in the region, capable of fulfilling the role of a regional transportation hub) and Greece, but further development of the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative (better known as New Silk Road initiative) could increase Chinese influence in the region.[24] The goal is to circumvent trade restrictions and export products directly to the EU using free trade agreements that the Western Balkans countries have with the EU.

For the Western Balkans countries Chinese investments in the region are opening up the possibility that necessary resources for economic development can be provided by the player who does not insist on the conditionality as the EU does.

What are the consequences of the growing geopolitical competition in the Western Balkans? Not all outside actors have a potentially destabilizing agenda for the region (look at the Chinese example). But, if a power vacuum in the region created by the EU indecisiveness persists, there is a real danger of further weakening of fragile governance structures in the region and consequently an undermining of the stability and security of the Western Balkans. Each new political and economic crisis in the region is strengthening a possibility of undermining the EU's influence, especially if relations between Russia and the West continue to deteriorate. If such conditions persist, the influence of mentioned non-EU actors in the region will

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[23] For analysis of Chinese geopolitical and economic interests in the Western Balkans see: van de Ven, Johan. 2016. One Belt, One Road and the Balkan Dimension of CEEC 16+1 In: The Geopolitical Relevance of Piraeus and China's New Silk Road for Southeast Europe and Turkey, ed. Frans-Paul van der Putten. Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', pp.21-37.

[24] For analysis of economic aspects of the OBOR initiative, see: The One Belt One Road Initiative: an Opportunity for Western Balkans, Intesa Sanpaolo - International Research Network, May 2016.

increase. Escalation of the geopolitical competition will further negatively affect existing political, economic and social problems in the Western Balkan countries and impair their weak governance structures.

Conclusion

Looking at the described situation, what are the prospects for the future development of regional security cooperation? It is obvious that tackling issues such as organized crime, corruption, illegal migrations and cooperation in cases of disaster preparedness require further development of regional security cooperation in the Western Balkans.

The deciding factor in determining prospects for further development of security cooperation in the Western Balkan is the EU. From 1997 onwards, the EU gradually took a leading role in the stabilization of the Western Balkans. The EU also became a regional security provider. This leadership role is based on the promise that combination of geopolitical stability ensured by outside factors (NATO, EU) and the promise of Union membership if candidate countries adopt and implement necessary political and economic reforms.

Unfortunately, these conditions have faltered: after two decades of involvement in the Western Balkans, the EU is showing clear signs of fatigue. A combination of internal EU developments regarding the future of the Union, growing resistance and reluctance among EU member countries for Union expansion and complex and multiple problems in the Western Balkans have weakened the EU's resolve for further enlargement. Lack of enlargement prospects for the Western Balkans countries also puts in doubt their future commitment for fulfilling demanding standards for membership.

Regional security cooperation is also affected by consequences of the EU hesitancy. The achieved framework of functional security cooperation will not disappear. But, this is a very shaky framework. Each disturbance in relations between countries of the region could further diminish security cooperation. For example, the absence of formal relations between Kosovo

and Serbia significantly weakens their cooperation in combatting organised crime and prevents proper control of their mutual border.[25] The second example is a short crisis between Croatia and Serbia in September 2015 when Croatia temporary closed the border with Serbia to prevent further influx of illegal migrants, which also resulted in halting the cargo traffic and created tensions between both countries.

Does this mean that NATO should again take the role of the key security provider in the region? Despite past successes and Montenegro's accession (which could strengthen NATO's influence in the region), NATO will not take the role of the Western Balkans primary security provider again. NATO is a military alliance primary focused on the hard security issue. In the case of serious crisis, NATO can organise a military intervention and be tasked with this, but the Alliance cannot take responsibility for the political and economic transition of the countries of the region. This is the role for the EU, which is now the key security provider in the region.

The EU is still an important power in the Western Balkans, but no longer predominant. To review its sagging influence the EU must rethink its enlargement model and its applicability in the Western Balkans.

The EU needs to provide strong leadership and needs to be directly involved in the process of nation and state-building in the countries of the Western Balkans. Strong and focused leadership has been a key factor for the success of the Western European integration which started at the end of 1940s. In the case of Western European political and economic integration leadership and support was provided by the US and accepted by the countries of the region.[26]

To overcome the current situation, the EU needs to clearly define its framework for enlargement and modify criteria for membership. This does not mean discarding the Copenhagen Criteria, but to modify and apply them to the specific situations in each candidate country. This also means

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[25] See: Kursani, 2015, pp. 9-10.
[26] See: Lundestad, Geir. 1997. Empire By Integration: The United States And European Integration, 1945-1997. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

that the EU needs to stop treating reforms in the context of enlargement as technical issues, and be directly involved in state-building processes in the candidate countries.

It cannot be taken for granted that the EU will be able to change the integration model and provide strong leadership in the Western Balkans. The EU's internal problems, coupled with the enlargement fatigue, have contributed to its loss of leverage in the Western Balkans. These circumstances are opening doors for a growing influence of the other geopolitical competitors who are offering the more visible benefits of cooperation and challenging the Union's primacy in the region. Stable peace in the Western Balkans is not yet secure and the region remains a target area of geopolitical contest between powerful outside actors.

Those factors also have a potential for constraining the scope and content of the Western Balkans regional security cooperation in the future. Despite the achieved results, countries of the Western Balkans still perceive regional cooperation as externally driven. The governments are engaged in regional initiatives in order to fulfil the expectations of their Western partners. In such circumstances attempts to transfer regional cooperation ownership from the EU to the countries of the region achieved limited results.[27] This is the main reason why in the last two decades regional security cooperation did not result in the creation of a shared regional security identity as a basis for long term creation of a regional security community.

The greatest danger for the Western Balkans is the possibility of remaining outside the EU indefinitely. A continuing status quo would further weaken their political and economic stability. This would facilitate strengthening the soft security threats, geopolitical competition in and even open a possibility of reawakening interstate armed conflicts in the region. If the EU does not show willingness for a more comprehensive approach to the

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[27] This is tasking of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) which in 2008 succeeded the Stability pact initiative. The RCC results are limited due the fact that without resolving political issues and differences between countries in the region is not possible to transfer regional cooperation ownership from the EU to them (see: Ohanyan, 2015, pp. 118-151).

Western Balkans, its political and economic significance in the region will be further diminished.

Even in the worst case scenarios, regional security cooperation will not recede entirely into oblivion. But it will be limited and prone to breaking.

A Perspective of Montenegro in the Context of NATO Integration and the Importance of Regional Security Cooperation in the Western Balkans

Blagoje Gledović

Why Regional Security Cooperation?

Giving an overview of the content of this paper, what should be laid out as a reminder is actually explaining mostly about the importance of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans in general and particularly regional security cooperation. In that regard it is quite expected to say that given the whole historical context, as well as the current state of the relations among the countries in the Balkans region, particularly among former Yugoslav states, the fact is that regional cooperation in all possible fields plays a crucial role for the region. Furthermore, it could be said that this is, in some ways, a natural need in the Balkans and South East Europe, due to geographical and cultural proximity of the states and interlinks of the societies. In addition, the regional cooperation has been highlighted almost as condition sine qua non for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the region, which has been set up by the West to prepare the region for the joint future and mutual life in the European community.

In particular, regional security cooperation is far more important given its nature and sensitivity and maybe often political dimension that carries. Therefore, it could be used as a tool to measure the level of integration in the region, how far politics has evolved, to what extent institutions developed, how many countries are actually dealing with the challenges for the sake of stability and a secure future.

Explaining concretely the benefits of regional security cooperation in various aspects, current NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy once wrote:

> "The logic of regional security cooperation is clear. By pooling resources in the right way, like-minded countries can enhance their own security more effectively. Economically, cooperation allows for economies of scale and the acquisition of

equipment that would otherwise be unaffordable for individual, especially smaller countries. Militarily, cooperation multiplies the potential of any individual country's armed forces. Politically, cooperation in the security field is the ultimate confidence and security-building measure because it requires transparency, coordination and mutual trust."[1]

At the same time, regional security cooperation is of utmost importance for addressing different security challenges that are present today in the region. Challenges such as danger of terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism, organized crime and illicit trafficking, illegal migrations are present as most pressing issues which require cooperation and close collaboration between authorities of the states in the region. Those challenges remain as pressing issues that could be efficiently and effectively addressed only in a way which includes a common approach and collaboration and joint actions. In addition to this, other very important threats could come from the emergence of different instabilities – political, ethnic and religious rivalries, even territorial disputes, all of those quite already very familiar with the Balkans, taking into account past times.

Montenegro in the Context of Bilateral Relations and Regional Cooperation with Attention to Security Cooperation

As it has been said already, regional cooperation so far evolved in one of the most important issues in the Balkans region and South East Europe, in some way could be said that without good neighbourhood policy and relations, it becomes meaningless for the countries to discuss any other issues of mutual interest or concern. As a result, many countries in this region have put the issue of good regional relations very high on the agenda of their governments.

Montenegro, for instance, among its foreign policy priorities has established **promoting and maintaining good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation**. This has been described in the way that an active engagement of Montenegro in regional cooperation, good neighbourhood

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[1] Appathurai, James: Promoting regional Security, NATO's evolving partnerships, NATO Review 2001 http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2001/NATO-evolving-partnerships/ Promoting-regional-security/EN/index.htm.

relations, and policy development with a regional context in mind, is crucial for the achievement of strategic integration goals of Montenegro – European Union and NATO membership. Thus, creating good relations and establishing communication is particularly important in the political, economic, security, cultural, scientific fields.[2]

So it is quite clear how much importance is given to this subject in overall governmental policy, and that the security cooperation is mentioned as one of the areas with a particular emphasis. As regards to the state of relations and cooperation of Montenegro and its neighbours in the security area, put simply, it is quite broad and full of content. However, in main points, security cooperation in the region has been reflected as especially important in the fields of defence and military, security and intelligence, justice and home affairs, cooperation in the field of emergency situations or disaster management and prevention. In this regard, Montenegro has so far developed and intensive bilateral relations with all countries in the region and beyond. Cooperation is very strong and successfully evolved in recent past with Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is reflected through communication and mutual work on a range of issues.

In the field of judiciary and home affairs (police) there have been many important bilateral agreements signed with Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia and Croatia aimed at close cooperation of law enforcement, investigative and judicial authorities in the fight against serious crimes. This is of special value, since it could be said that criminal organizations in the region highly cooperate between each other without "political disputes". As for the police perspective, very good exchange of criminal intelligence information is noted between Montenegrin and Serbian police authorities for instance could be noted, and that has been reflected through many serious crime cases that were conducted in joint cooperation between these authorities. In general, regularly conducted joint police and prosecutorial actions between Balkan countries on suppression of the illicit drug trafficking on regional level became almost a pattern of work of law enforcement agencies. There is also a very good level of exchange of intelligence and criminal

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[2]   More on Montenegro foreign policy priorities at: http://www.mvpei.gov.me/en/ ministry/Foreign-Policy/.

intelligence data among all states in addressing issues such as terrorism, violent extremism, illegal drugs trafficking and other crimes. So it could be said that cooperation in this field is an example how states can jointly work on some problems. Why? Simply said, there are mutual interests in doing common projects, since the dimension of the challenges transfers over the borders of countries. As an a example, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia with the assistance of international partners jointly participated in the project of developing criminal intelligence capacities for so called SOCTA in cooperation with international partners.[3]

In this context, the European Union is particularly putting an emphasis on this area, considering regional cooperation as instrumental in addressing the security challenges facing the region, since many urgent issues, such as organised crime and corruption, or integrated border management and illegal migration, can be effectively addressed only by a trans-border approach. Concerted action here is indispensable, not just as an end in itself but also a signal to the rest of Europe that all the western Balkan countries share the EU's determination on this issue.[4]

Defence and military cooperation is very intensive with each of the said states. According to the Report on the State of the Army of Montenegro 2015,[5] this cooperation is broad and relates to the participation in joint exercises, conferences, working meetings, expert consultations, training of the army officers and special army divisions and education of cadets at foreign academies, defence planning and emergency planning consultations, security-intelligence affairs, logistics and infrastructure, arms destruction, military medicine etc. It also reflects through different initiatives, exercises, trainings and overall building capacities of defence sector. As an example, in 2015 with Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina Montenegro had cooperation even in military-intelligence affairs, by exchanging experiences and conducting joint activities.

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[3] More at: http://spcp2012-16.ch/?page_id=422.

[4] Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkans – A policy priority for the European Union, Publication of European Commission, 2005, p. 8. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/nf5703249enc_web_en.pdf.

[5] More at: http://www.mod.gov.me/.

In the context of disaster readiness and emergency situations prevention and management, cooperation is intensive in organization of joint exercises between civil security stakeholders and institutions, participation at regional and international projects. There are numerous consultations and forums discussing possible solutions and collaboration in the case of emerging different natural disasters or artificially induced incidents. Furthermore, as an evidence of good relations in this field, one should emphasise the 2014 floods in the region and highly affected Serbia, where each state jumped to provide help to neighbours in mitigating effects of the disasters. Montenegro sent an army unit to Serbia, and Army put all its capacities at disposal for Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, but other stakeholders from state administration and private sector were involved as well.[6]

However, as regards to the Montenegro, the cooperation in the field of military and defence is particularly important with NATO countries such as Croatia which plays a crucial partner in the context of NATO integration, field of defence (Afghanistan – joint participation in ISAF and now Resolute Support mission, joint training projects for the purpose of participation in Resolute Support mission, BRAAD and ADSE). In particular, activities in the military and defence area and building capacities are regularly conducted with Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (cooperation agreements, technical agreements).[7]

Cooperation with regional states is also reflected through various regional initiatives such as the Adriatic Charter or A5 which represents strategic partnership between the member countries which recognize common interests, such as the strengthening of bilateral and multilateral relations between the member states and other countries in the region, with a view to ensure safety and total integration into European and transatlantic political, economic, security and defence institutions (Croatia, Albania, Macedonia, BH, Montenegro and the US),[8] Balkan Countries Chiefs of Defence/Gen-

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[6] More about emergency situations management in Montenegro at the website of the Ministry of Interior: http://www.mup.gov.me/rubrike/vanredne-situacije.

[7] More about the regional defence cooperation at the website of the Ministry of Defence of Montenegro: http://www.mod.gov.me/ministarstvo.

[8] https://www.morh.hr/en/agendacrm/a5/240-crm2015/agenda/12143-crm-2015-za-web-hrvatski.html.

eral Staff (CHODs) Forum, regional initiative-forum with the aim of enhancing military cooperation at all levels and improving capabilities of the states of the region to be able to respond to potential non-conventional threats.[9]

All these frameworks are particularly important in the concretization of the cooperative activities and mutual defence and military policy developments in the region. Major players like the United States and NATO or its members are involved in supporting these forums, for the sake of Euro-Atlantic Integration processes in the region. It is quite important to also mention some of those specifically important projects on regional level such as the NATO BRAAD initiative[10] aimed at provision of air defence capabilities to the nations in the Balkan region, which is related to Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia with Croatia as leading nation and NATO's Air and Missile Defence Committee being the Sponsor Committee for the project.

NATO Integration and its Influence as Regards to the Scope and Quality of Regional Security Relations

What has been described in the previous section was an introduction to the subject which is quite important in the context of regional security cooperation, and that is how influential Euro-Atlantic integration processes are as regards to the scope and quality of regional security cooperation in the Balkans and South East Europe. It is an integral part of the subject and whole issue and very much relevant when we talk about regional security cooperation in general.

First of all, NATO integration is of special importance for security cooperation. Given the nature of military – political organisation, in the portfolio of NATO, some of the security aspects are particularly highlighted therefore providing effective mechanisms for partner nations to closely work together on strengthening and mutually unifying their capacities for addressing most complex challenges of today. More importantly, the nature

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[9]   http://www.balkanchodforum.net/.
[10] https://www.ncia.nato.int/Documents/Agency%20publications/Balkan%20
      Regional%20Approach%20to%20Air%20Defence%20(BRAAD).pdf.

of security cooperation, its sensitivity and high need for mutual trust and confidentiality, experience, but facts as well lead to conclusion that special areas of security cooperation (such as intelligence, data exchange, data security protection, military planning) are closely communicated only between allied countries, which makes a difference in comparison to classical bilateral cooperation. Therefore, the NATO framework has many advantages and its partner cooperation enables countries particularly to develop and improve their military and defence sector and boost security sector reform in direction and according to the high standards of the Alliance.

For Montenegro, the NATO accession process so far served and will further serve as an added value. Prior to getting an invitation for membership on December 2015, the country had undergone five cycles of the Membership Action Plan, including the period of so called intensified and focus talks with the Alliance, which meant planning and implementing very broad and complex sets of reforms in many areas not limited to defence, military, security but the rule of law, economy and other political area reforms.[11]

Regional cooperation has been a part of that process as well, and today it could be said that the examples and results of very good security and defence cooperation are highly visible, and the fact is that security relations like with Croatia and Albania which are already NATO members, speak for themselves. Even Slovenia may serve as a proof model, helping Montenegro during accession process (NATO Point of Contact Embassy, advice on NATO integration issues etc.). As said, Croatia is one of the most crucial partner countries for Montenegro which is reflected through resolute support mission in Afghanistan in which Montenegrin and Croatian Army participate and conduct joint projects focused on training of armed forces, joint participation, field support etc.

Conclusions and Possible Recommendations

In order to draw some lines of conclusions, certain facts and situation analysis should be taken into consideration. Namely, including various aspects

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[11] More about Montenegro relations with NATO at: http://www.mvpei.gov.me/en/sections/NATO/Directorate-General-for-NATO-and-Security-Policy/.

in the whole story about the regional cooperation in the Balkans, it may be noted that although there is still a lot of room for improvement, it is evident that the regional cooperation in general among Balkans states nowadays is rather intensive, broad and quite satisfying in different areas.

Security cooperation in the region reached a certain optimal level given the need for its existence and constant improvement. However, it could be noted that the quality and scope of the cooperation in this field is not the same among all countries. For those people who are experts and involved in the issues, but even for some spectrum of spectators as well, it is already clearly visible that the dimension of security relations and cooperation in this field is in some significant, sometimes crucial points better and stronger when it comes to NATO countries and partner countries already established respective level of cooperation with NATO. (e.g. Montenegro – Croatia – Albania : Montenegro – Macedonia – Bosnia). Special aspects and particular fields such as security affairs, defence and military, intelligence, are better "communicated" and comprehensively effected among NATO states as well as NATO aspirant countries. This fact is another one relevant when giving arguments and supporting thesis on Euro-Atlantic future of the region, the crucial role of the NATO and European Union for areas such as security.

Moreover, stronger cooperation in the field of security is continuously needed and is of particular importance for further democratic processes, building mutual understanding and developing stronger ties in the period of "post-conflict era" in the Balkans. It could also be a kind of catalyst for regaining trust between the parts of the region that were also very exposed in the conflicts, by uniting them to work on issues of mutual interest and of importance for future stability and citizen security.

At the same time, it is crucial to tackle the most important problems and challenges. Almost all the security challenges that the region and states facing today are not related to only one country, neither can it be addressed without a common approach. Additionally, security cooperation is the marker of more mature societies and prerequisite and basis for further integration of the region, as well as its joint future in the context of aspirations for the membership to NATO and European Union.

In the example of Montenegro as a country from the region, the conclusion could be that the process of NATO integration has so far enabled Montenegro to closely cooperate on security issues with some states from the region and in particular points such as building capacities of armed forces and defence sector in general. This led to benefits in building capacities and implementing reforms and gaining experiences, all of that very valuable in preparing for the future membership in this international organisation.

In geopolitical context, an important factor in security cooperation between Western Balkan and South East European states in future will be their orientation and external policy towards big players on the West or Russia on the East. There is no doubt that "the Russia factor" is still present at certain level in the Balkans. Through its engagement in different aspects such as political, cultural, religious, economical, Russia so far proved that this part of the Europe is still in the sphere of its interest. Although this phenomenon could not be of nature and complexity like for instance in the countries of the EU Eastern neighbourhood, it must be noted that this fact remains an impediment for security cooperation in some sensitive fields, because of creating conditions where there is a feeling of a lack of mutual trust that is needed for closer inter-relations, due to the obvious clear differences in the approach to strategic issues.

With Albania, Croatia being already a member of NATO, Montenegro which will become a member already next year, Macedonia candidate state, there is no doubt that the framework for security cooperation and security umbrella for the region is clear. Although many tend to believe that Serbia will once in the close future be in the NATO as well, its current position and affiliation, as well as the stance of political leaders toward that issue leaves no space for certainty regarding sooner stronger engagement with Alliance. Kosovo as a non-integrated state, although aspires toward Western integration frameworks, is actually still an importer of security from the West, rather than it is expected to be the opposite. In terms of maintaining stability in the Region and cherishing stronger ties between Balkan countries, NATO integration is a common denominator of tighter relations, because Balkan countries could enhance the cooperation and exchange of experiences in this field by engaging more strongly with the Alliance. No better framework in this field could be seen as more adequate and appro-

priate for the whole region. No fair alternative could exist which would, in the long term guarantee peace, cooperation and stability in this region.

Finally, each country has declared the will to become a member of the European Union in the future, and the fact is that NATO is the corner stone of European security and stability today. At the same time, the Euro Atlantic integration processes in general the Balkans region have already gone far, which is a reason to believe that all the countries will eventually find themselves at the finish line of the same track.

Security Challenges of Regional Cooperation
From Democracy to Neutrality

Vlade Radulović

Introduction

Speaking about regional cooperation in the security field from the Serbian perspective, there are two essential periods in not so far history that were decisive for defining its position both in regional and international relations. The first was the time of the SFR of Yugoslavia break down and civil wars during the 1990s as a result of the general collapse of an idea and its system. The second period started with the fall-down of the Slobodan Milošević's regime in 2000, opening comprehensive reforms of Serbian society including the area of regional cooperation and defence and the security sector as a whole. Today, 17 years after the democratic changes and 11 years after Montenegro became an independent state, the unchallenged pro-European development of Serbia found itself in a rift between East and West. Complicated relations with Russia on one side and the US, EU and NATO on the other, tense relations with Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and the unresolved Kosovo status are all just a part of the security challenges and obstacles that Serbia faces in regional cooperation today. However, contrary to its past, Serbia is committed and ready to cooperate on all levels just through activities such as the Partnership for Peace program, numerous international agreements, participation in the UN and EU peace operations as well as through joint multinational military exercises and the international fight against terrorism and organized crime. Naturally, the willingness of all Balkan players to compromise will have a direct impact on the level of regional relationships and the cooperation with NATO. Montenegro's accession to NATO should contribute to the stabilization process of the region as a whole and improve the already established civil-military relationships ensuring a continued democratization process of societies based on the rule of law. Thereby, a distinctive mechanism for peaceful and successful resolution of conflict situations should be established.

Past Effects and Implications to Future Regional Cooperation

The former Yugoslavia was not bypassed by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of European communism. After economic and social wellbeing, the Balkan grounds slid step by step but steadily toward one of the darkest decades of modern world history. The last decade of the 20th century, full of antagonism and resurrected Balkan ethnic nationalism together with common religious history of yesterday's communists, resulted in the cruellest violent scenes sparing not even women and children.

Alongside with pictures of refugee convoys, concentration camps and whole cities in flames, the Balkanization ghost was also integrated into international political traffic. The bloody fall down of Yugoslavia woke many Westerners up from their post-Cold War dreams and the Balkan became a nasty symbol of failed expectations.[1]

Even 30 years after the end of the "brotherhood and unity" project we see that national passions connected to the Balkan powder keg have never been neutralized. In fact, quite the opposite is true. These passions are considered a basic obstacle to the full accession of the Western Balkans into the Euro-Atlantic integrations and a serious challenge for its future cooperation. Of course, there are substantial shifts toward the resolution of frozen conflicts but there are also grounds for raising the question of excluding war as a sole mechanism and option for resolving conflicts. However, from this point in history one may say that serious progress has been made in cooperation fields and the hardest transition to post-conflict from conflict society is left behind. But in spite of not so popular shifts, such as the Hague Tribunal cooperation and facing up to committed crimes in the past, an impression is made that the shifts are the ones that deserve credit for "keeping alive" interethnic tensions. It is particularly evident in the example of Serbia to which even the regional reconciliation willingness and dismissing troubles from the past in principle seemed a counterproductive attitude inherently bringing a tide of dissatisfaction regarding both Euro-Atlantic integrations and neighboring relationships.

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[1]　See Ejdus, Filip: Od balkanizacije do bezbednosne zajednice. (From Balkanization to security community), Belgrade 2011.

Identity groups, some political parties and various far-right wing movements took advantage of such a climate in which the US and NATO were considered as prime targets. They continued to promote themselves and pursue their own interests by achieving profits from a saber-rattling policy with no hesitation to repeat the same events from the past, no matter their costly lessons learnt even by the Serbian people.[2] Their rhetorics and ideas deeply rooted in history and past experiences led to consequences still vivid even in modern times requiring further deep analysis.

As an introduction to the consequence analysis it might be useful to remember George Santayana's statement, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Santayana's statement has always been troublesome because anyone who truly remembers history is all too well aware that history is always repeated, regardless of whether it is remembered.[3] In relation to that, having in mind all of the aforementioned, it is clear that future regional cooperation and relationships in the region will be influenced by past events, among other things, thus we are free to say that the greatest challenge the Western Balkans are going to face in the future will be our ability to overcome our common past.

Post Conflict Times and Regional Cooperation Growth

But then, after the October 2000 power shift, Serbia has the opportunity to make its first step away from the authoritarian regime with its quasi-market economy (mostly directed one) and patriarchal political culture, as well as to start its transition toward a liberal democratic type of state. One of the first reform tasks was the normalization of relations with neighboring countries, the West and international organizations so this period was distinctive by return of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) to the world political theatre.[4] Furthermore, the FRY started the normaliza-

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[2] The most apparent example confirming this hypothesis is the so called 2011 "Log Revolution" in Kosovo North with the war torn Knin Krajina revolution of the same name and almost the same screenplay in early 90s of the last century.

[3] Cordesman, Anthony H., The War after the War. Strategic lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan. Washington DC 2004, p. 3.

[4] See Socio-political Context in: Context of Analysis of Security Sector Reforms in Serbia1989-2009, p. 18, Belgrade 2011.

tion process of its relations with the NATO. The Federal Government adopted a policy allowing the FRY to join the PfP program and an agreement was signed between the NATO and the FRY providing NATO to use airspace for its mission requirements in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. In order to achieve the above, the NATO-FRY Technical Committee was formed. Finally, Serbia started to meet its obligations to the Hague Tribunal best illustrated by extraditing its numerous high officials.[5] But after the 90s' turbulent times, the security reform and cooperation became a particular challenge.

After the armed conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia, cooperation in areas of defence or security services' operation was of special sensitivity. So it could be said that regional cooperation in the above fields achieved particularly visible results. The achievement was partly the result of the apparent involvement and growing interest of international players in the above fields as well as of regional nations' interests to acquire international "legitimacy" through regional projects ensuring adequate support for certain substantial goals such as the NATO accession or law enforcement cooperation (Interpol, Europol, etc.). Particularly evident and apparent is the US involvement in this area standing out of its otherwise moderate and discrete involvement in other regional issues.[6]

A series of meetings of the Conference for Stability, Security and Cooperation in the South East European countries confirmed the above together with the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) meetings where numerous important declarations were adopted as a start, such as the Sofia Declaration,[7] Thessaloniki Declaration[8] and Antalya Declaration.[9]

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Lopanja Duško/Kronja Jasminka: Regionalne inicijative i multilateralna saradnja na Balkanu (Regional Initiatives and Multilateral Cooperation in the Balkans), Belgrade 2010, p. 195.

[7] The Sofia Declaration of Foreign Ministers (July 6 1996) sets out good- neighbourly relations, stability, security and cooperation in the Balkans including very broad goals of possible regional cooperation. According to the declaration, the cooperation is divided into four main groups: 1) Political relations (improvement of good-neighbourly relations and trust building measures); 2) Regional economic cooperation (cooperation across the borders, infrastructure, trade and investments, environment); 3)

From the perspective of Serbia as the FRY successor country, the most important meeting was the one held in Skopje soon after the democratic changes in Serbia.

At the Fourth Official Meeting of the Heads of State and Government (February 2001, Skopje), full membership to the initiative was returned to the FRY while Bosnia and Herzegovina went over from the status of an observer to full participant. Thus, the initiative included eight sovereign states (with Croatia as observer). The Declaration reaffirmed basic principles of the SEECP Charter and its commitment to full cooperation with European and Euro-Atlantic structures. The summit also adopted the Acting Plan for regional economic cooperation and the Economic Forum was held in the eve of the high level meeting attended by regional economic and trade ministers together with economic officials.[10]

Immediately next year, in 2002 the FRY chaired the SEECP but despite this important role, this period for Serbia is marked by two very important internal events. The first one in February 2003 was the time of the FR Yugoslavia transformation into the State Community of Serbia and Montenegro and the other one is the killing of the FRY Government Prime Minister, Dr. Zoran Djindjić in March 2003. However, the most important events during this time were the preparations for the coming Thessaloniki summit "EU-Western Balkans" considered by many officials of central importance for the regional future. The FRY chairman-ship was a fresh start and step ahead within the SEECP's earlier operation focusing on the four particular areas of cooperation clearly substantial for the whole region.

Humanitarian cooperation and human rights and 4) Internal affairs and justice issues.

[8]   The Thessaloniki Declaration of Foreign Ministers (June 10 1997) highlighted "the European orientation of the regional countries" as integral part of their political, economic and social development."

[9]   The Antalya Declaration (October 13 1998) confirmed the need for institutionalized cooperation at various levels on different political subjects with taken view that "South East European countries should jointly resolve regional issues."

[10] Lopanja Duško/Kronja Jasminka: Regionalne inicijative i multilateralna saradnja na Balkanu (Regional Initatives and Multilateral Cooperation in the Balkans), Belgrade 2010, p. 64.

The cooperation areas were as follows: free trade, energy and communication of energy systems, telecommunications and the fight against organized crime. So beside the summit and political meetings, several sector gatherings were held on ministerial level. Numerous next summits and agreements brought many decisions for improving regional relationships and 2006 was profound because the Stability Pact for Stability of South East Europe decided to transform itself in order to strengthen roles and responsibilities of regional states in their mutual cooperation.

In May of the same year, at the Belgrade Regional Table Meeting of the Stability Pact of SEE, several future priorities were identified, including very important security cooperation issues[11] as another example of steps taken together with other initiatives and implemented reforms on a regional level, now behind us, that contributed to better regional cooperation and even integration of some regional states into the European Union (Croatia) and NATO (Croatia, Albania and Montenegro).

The international community continued to support the Balkan countries immensely in the area of their mutual cooperation. The best example is seen in Serbia after its October 2000 changes when it started to gradually return to the mainstream of international and regional relations. While its path from complete isolation has mostly been crossed over to open and modern European society and its reforms and cooperation with the Hague Tribunal have come to an end successfully, there are still some open key issues and challenges with potential to hamper the future Euro-Atlantic integration of Serbia, as well as causing a certain level of regional crisis. One should remember primarily the Serbian attitude toward Kosovo and Metohija and its status resolution as well as the Bosnia and Herzegovina unity question, e.g. rethinking about its constitutional order guaranteed by the Dayton agreement.

Besides the above two issues, recently another one came out relating to sanctions against the Russian Federation repeatedly rejected by Serbia with justification of its foreign policy strategy of traditionally good relations both

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[11] Security cooperation included security sector reforms together with defence sector and counterproliferation of prohibited small arms.

with the East and the West. As of now, this foreign policy method has had certain achievements but also a justifiable question is raised – how long the official Belgrade will be allowed to "sit on two chairs", having in mind the EU pre-accession talks and the opening of Chapter 31 with direct impact on its alignment with the EU's common foreign, security and defence policy.

Despite the above issues, there is no doubt that Serbia seeks to find a compromise showing the will to accept the complete burden of the past on its shoulders. The Brussels agreement that is connected to Belgrade's dialogue with Priština/Prishtina and its official abandoning of the idea to support the referendum on the Republic Srpska Day that was held on September 25 2016 are examples of good but not best practices. On the other hand, good regional cooperation depends not only on Serbia, however cooperation of all regional countries is necessary together with the political will and readiness of the political elite to make compromises and cooperation and to establish cooperation full implementation of initiated reforms with the goal to transform the Balkans into a safe and integrated region.

Security Sector Reforms in Serbia and Most Important Developments in the Serbia-NATO Relations

In the early 21ˢᵗ century, a number of political, economic and security initiatives have been initiated in South East Europe by the European Union, NATO, OSCE, Council of Europe, US, EU member states and Balkan states. The goal of initiated regional initiatives was to maintain peace and stability in South East Europe. The strengthening of regional cooperation is one of the foreign policy priorities of the Republic of Serbia accomplished through active participation in regional initiatives and organizations. For Serbia's Ministry of Defence, which committed itself to more active participation, the regional security initiatives and organizations are a profound support for its defence reform processes.[12]

When speaking about the implementation of reforms in Serbia, key players were solely parliamentary parties and the political elite who determined the

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[12] Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia: http://www.mod.gov.rs /sadrzaj. php?id_sadrzaja=4363, accessed on 18.9.2016.

pace and the direction of solutions in regard to the reform of the defence sector during the last decade of the 20th and first decade of the 21st century. On the other hand, we may say that we indeed saw no pressure from international players but requests for faster track reforms and their more consistent implementation. In this regard non-government organizations and independent state institutions of control have played an important role.[13] By their activity they usually have indicated cases of human rights violations or have given their opinion on laws and regulations relating to the security sector and naturally that was the main shift and one of the most positive changes after the dark 1990s.

However, the most significant time for security sector reforms was the period between September 2008 and June 2011. During this time a set of laws was passed regulating the responsibilities of state actors in the security sector. The Law on the Agency for Fight Against Corruption (2008), the Law on the Military Security and Military Intelligence Agencies (2009) were passed and the Law on the Serbian Armed Forces and Defence Law were modified and amended (2009). Furthermore, several laws were adopted relevant for regulating public monitoring process over the security sector and for human rights protection such as: the Law on Protection of Personal Data (2008), Discrimination Act (2009), Classified Information Act (2009) and the Law on Electronic Communications (2010). There was no public discussion before their adoption. Furthermore, legislators tended to extend authorities of state security actors at the expense of the democratic civil control and public monitoring authorities. It is best seen in the example of introducing Article 14a in the Law on the SAF forbidding the MoD members to be involved in actions of citizen associations and in the example of the Article 9 of the Law on MSA and MIA authorizing the MSA members to get inquiry into state databases without a court warrant.[14]

While in certain segments questionable, the legislative reforms basically followed the state policy reflecting the readiness of the political elite for full cooperation both on regional and international level.

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[13] Particularly the institution of Ombudsman and Commissioner for Information of Public Importance.

[14] Main findings in: Yearbook of Security Sector Reform in Serbia 2012, p. 25.

That is also reaffirmed by the high official approach for the Republic of Serbia to be guided by the National Security Strategy showing readiness for contribution to build up and strengthen of its own, regional and global security within the organization of the United Nations, European and other international organizations and regional structures. Military-political developments in the world are closely monitored as well as global and regional challenges and threats together with security implications for the Republic of Serbia and its international position. The most substantial actions regarding security policy are focused on coordination with the EU in the area of the Common Security and Defence Policy, as well as on cooperation within the NATO Partnership for Peace program and the United Nations, the OSCE, as well as international forums and initiatives for disarmament, non-proliferation and weapons' control.[15] In that direction is also made a set of very important decisions in the defence and international cooperation fields and primarily it is necessary to point out the decisions made by Serbia and NATO. Some of the most significant developments are as follows:

- In 2003, Serbia and Montenegro officially applied for accession in the NATO Partnership for Peace program;
- on September 7, 2006 top state authorities of the Republic of Serbia signed the Status of Forces Agreement with the US;
- on November 29, 2006 at the Riga NATO Summit, the Republic of Serbia was invited to be accessed in the Partnership for Peace program and subsequently became an official participant on December 14 of the same year;
- on December 18, 2006 in Belgrade the NATO Military Liaison Office was opened based on the Transit Arrangements Agreement;
- In 2007, the government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Presentation Document defining areas of cooperation with NATO and actions to be taken for pursuing the partnership goals. On September 5, 2007 at the NATO headquarters the document was

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[15] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia: http://www.mfa.gov.rs/sr/ index.php/spoljna politika/sbp?lang=lat, accessed on 18.9.2016.

submitted by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vuk Jeremić and soon Serbia opened its participation in the Planning and Review Process, the basic mechanism of the Partnership for Peace program intended to level up interoperability of the Serbian Armed Forces units;

- on October 1, 2008 the Republic of Serbia reached the Information Security Agreement officially signed on July 5, 2011 and ratified it in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia;
- at the same time, the Serbian Government made the decision to open the Republic of Serbia Mission to NATO officially opened in December next year;
- in February 2011, the Republic of Serbia government adopted the Conclusion on starting the procedure for developing the Individual Partnership Action Plan. In line with that, on July 14 2011, the Government passed the IPAP Presentation Document and it was presented in the NATO headquarters in Brussels soon after that, on November 25 of the same year;
- during 2012, the Republic of Serbia Mission to NATO chaired successfully the South East European Steering Group;
- in June 2013, the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Training Centre in Kruševac got the status of Partnership Training and Education Center officially acquiring regional center status;
- In January 2014, during the official US visit, the then Minister of Defence of the Republic of Serbia, Nebojša Rodić, signed the Status of Forces Agreement ratified by the Republic of Serbia National Assembly in July 2015;
- On May 20, 2014, at the Luxemburg meeting of Major Groups of NATO Codification Committee the certificate of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia was signed on the full competence of Serbia in NATO codification system for tasks of codifying weapons and military equipment (Tier 2);
- in 2015, the Republic of Serbia Mission to NATO took over the chairmanship of the SEEGROUP, an informal forum that cooperates with NATO for consultations on politics and security for the sake of interest of the South Eastern European region;
- on January 15, 2015 the adoption procedure was completed

between the Republic of Serbia and NATO on the Individual Action Plan;

- in September 2015 the Republic of Serbia signed the Cooperation Agreement in the area of logistic support with the NATO Support and Procurement Organization and six months later, in February 2016, the Agreement was formally ratified;
- on November 19 and 20, 2015 during his official visit to the Republic of Serbia, the NATO General Secretary, Jens Stoltenberg announced the NATO decision on a fully relaxed air safety zone along the administration line with Kosovo and Metohija.

Together with numerous meetings and conferences also attended by top leaders of the Republic of Serbia, those events are sufficient enough to show the interest and readiness of domestic state authorities to cooperate with the NATO Alliance on their path toward the EU. Despite its military neutrality declared in principle, upon signing the IPAP agreement Serbia accomplished and accepted cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance at the highest level provided for a non-member nation. The only step left would be the application for the full Alliance membership, a step not to be seen in the foreseeable future by all accounts. On the whole, Serbia had no major setbacks in its reform processes and standards' adoption compared to the region although we have seen some challenges to European future after its democratic shifts. No matter of its turbulent times and political oscillations primarily during the first decade of 21st century, its security sector made an effort to keep up the pace not only with the region but also with other nations within its own domain and it is best corroborated by its numerous joint exercises.

Serbian Armed Forces Cooperation with Regional Countries

Modern security challenges, risks and threats, including primarily migrant crisis, international terrorism and organized crime, also affected regional security structures making an effort to maintain a high level of preparedness and capabilities through their mutual cooperation, joint exercises and information exchange in order to meet the above and other challenges in the most effective way. Consequently, periodic conferences of regional countries are held addressing mostly the 21st century security challenges and

risks containable by their joint efforts. Thus, the regional defence cooperation and close neighbourly relations among Balkan nations are essential for maintaining and strengthening a stable and secure environment both in the region and Europe.

While militarily neutral, the Republic of Serbia accomplished very important and intense cooperation with a great number of armed forces providing it with a high level of training and preparedness to perform various tasks. While there is good cooperation with the Russian Federation Armed Forces members, there are many more contacts and exercises with armed forces of the NATO member states.

There are many other examples such as: our staff officers' involvement in the Somalian navy operation; conducting international training jointly with the EUCOM members in civil-military cooperation in the South base; training course in the Kruševac Defence Center attended by 12 nations with the United Arab Emirates and Egypt; conducting and participating in the "Platinum Wolf" exercise together with the armed forces of Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Slovenia, Montenegro and US; participation in the "Saber Junction 16" exercise in Germany together with other 15 nations; conducting the "Air Solution" exercise with the Romanian Air Force members; conducting the "Neighbours" exercise with the Hungarian Armed Forces members; preparations for and conducting the "Balkan Response" exercise with five participating armed forces members and six observing nations; conducting the "Joint Response" exercise with the German, Croatian and Check Armed Forces members. Furthermore, we should point out the fact that as of now Serbia has signed more than 60 bilateral agreements on military-technical cooperation with NATO member states included.

In those terms, after the NATO memberships of Croatia and Albania, Montenegro's accession to NATO is a natural course of regional integration into modern security trends. Despite the undermined relations between Serbia and Montenegro after the Montenegrin recognition of Kosovo's independence, today they are in good terms and could be enhanced by NATO membership. On the other hand, there were some open issues between Serbia and Albania regarding the ratification of the IPAP agreement, Macedonian membership in NATO continued to be disputed by Greece

due to the country's name despite the Macedonian proclaimed intention and some official statements that they are willing to join NATO even under the name Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. All of the above emphasize the importance of NATO membership for all Balkan nations.

Conclusion

More than 20 years have passed since the end of the civil war in ex-Yugoslavia and the time we left behind us was distinctive by numerous regional initiatives, comprehensive reforms with sometimes drastically opposite political moves ranging from direct confrontation with NATO (e.g. FRY) to signing the IPAP agreement and adopting the highest possible level of cooperation with the Alliance. The democratic shifts in Serbia opened a new chapter in its cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance and 12 years have passed between its formal application for accession in the NATO Partnership for Peace program and the finalization of the procedures with the adoption of the NATO Individual Action Plan together with the Serbian military neutrality doctrine. During that period, regional cooperation in the security area has seen significant growth with joint military exercises, peace keeping missions and operations proving capacity, readiness and high interoperability of all Balkan forces with other NATO members. By this newest NATO enlargement to Montenegro and with Albania and Croatia on one side and Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania on the other, NATO came close to the Serbian borders providing potential additional motivation for us to reconsider our positions and make advantage of our neighbours' best practices and their support to reach a final decision.

Montenegro's membership will strengthen NATO's position in the Balkans and will be an extra tailwind for Serbia to reconsider its future position and open a different line of thinking in the Serbian public, as I sincerely hope. I anticipate enhanced military and also military-technical cooperation between Serbia and Montenegro, together with other nations in the region, including continued cooperation in countering international terrorism and organized crime as well as intelligence sharing.

Besides, there are Montenegrin Armed Forces members attending the Belgrade Military Academy, there is ongoing cooperation mediated by the

Kruševac Defence Center to which regional status Montenegro gave its immense contribution and we have to remember that Montenegro spared its simulator to Serbia for pilot training on the "Galeb G-4" aircraft. All of the above are just some evidence of good and fruitful cooperation during the previous years and at this moment it seems that there are no obstacles on the cooperation path in the region because de facto the whole region is within NATO or seeking toward its membership and closer NATO cooperation. Finally, all the aforementioned is sufficient enough for one to see how significant the issue of North Atlantic Alliance membership is. Alongside with military and security capacities the states' capacity will also grow enough to impact some very important and essential decisions. In that way nations will much resolve issues more easily and efficiently to their advantage while nations outside of the process, such as Serbia, will find itself in more complex situations.

Chances and Impediments for Intraregional Security Cooperation – a View from Albania

Arian Starova

Today's Regional Security Environment in a Democratic Western Balkan as a Solid Bedrock for Regional Cooperation

I would like to start by briefly speaking on the security situation in the Western Balkans as I strongly believe that it is this new situation of security in this region that has increasingly made the regional security cooperation among the countries a tangible reality.

Now, it is a widely accepted expert and general opinion that, for as much as the future of our Western Balkan region can be predicted, it is impossible to imagine large armed conflicts similar to the ones of its distant and near past history. These are great changes in the regional security environment as a result of the emergence of democratic regimes, the end of the last war on the territories of former Yugoslavia, a new climate of increasing opportunities for overall cooperation among the regional states and the substantial political and material investments from the side of NATO and the EU in this region and the Euro-Atlantic integration processes developing in the countries of the Western Balkans.

These major changes and achievements in the Western Balkans in the last almost twenty years have made it possible for the first time in its modern history that our region even began to export peace and security far away beyond its borders in the Middle East, or North Africa. This is extremely important as the history of the last century has clearly shown that the break of peace and security in our region has brought about European, or world wars.

Above all, there is the common strong strategic interest of all the Western Balkan countries in not allowing the creation of conditions that would make them return to the bloody conflicts of the past any more. These countries have tightly gripped the opportunity of cooperation as the only

way to stability, security and prosperity for all of them. The democratic changes in the Western Balkan countries at the beginning of the 1990s made the emergence of new political visions combined with reinforcement of national freedoms and the establishment of democratic institutions possible. It is already known that democratic states almost never engage in war amongst themselves as they generally lack the interest for that. These new conditions created new foundations for both domestic and regional stability and security. Therefore, a real regional interest in peace, stability, security and regional dialogue and cooperation began to establish itself. One of the brightest examples might be the recent successful dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. A new vision of the Western Balkan countries of their own stability, security and prosperity was also shaped in the framework of the cooperation with the UN, European Union, NATO, OSCE and other international organizations. Together, they began to share the same dream or vision of Euro-Atlantic integration. Today, the Balkan countries are aspiring countries, partner countries or members of the European Union and NATO. These two important organizations have indisputably brought additional security and stronger hopes for prosperity to the Balkan countries as they were representing the great example of a major success coming from dialogue and cooperation among the countries of Europe.

Although the expression "regional cooperation" sounds rather overemphasized, it seems to remain a key-word for a predictable long-term and peaceful development of the Western Balkans.

The regional cooperation might be considered to have established a recent and precious tradition for more than 17 years in the Western Balkans. It is a cooperation which covers almost all areas of social activities and in a way it is a general guarantee for future security. I take it for granted that the development of a specific cooperation of these Balkan countries in the field of security and defense through many bilateral, multilateral or regional initiatives or transnational organizations is being established.

Comprehensively, one might say that the dynamics between the democratic changes and the dialogue and cooperation in the Western Balkans resulted in the creation of a general awareness of the cooperation as an endless source of renewed chances. This is especially true in terms of security cooperation under the conditions of unpredictable global security threats

nowadays. Overall international and regional cooperation remains a consolidated excellent source of chances for a long-term security in the Western Balkans.

Now, I would like to speak a little longer on the international and regional or intraregional security cooperation and its chances in the Western Balkans. To me, first of all, the very process of cooperation which covers almost all the areas of social activities is always a substantial contribution to stability and security. In the Warsaw Summit Declaration of NATO's Heads of State and Governments, one reads:

> "The Western Balkans is a region of strategic importance, as demonstrated by our long history of cooperation and operations in the region. We remain fully committed to the stability and security of the Western Balkans, as well as to supporting the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of countries in the region. Democratic values, rule of law, domestic reforms, and good neighborly relations are vital for regional cooperation and for the Euro-Atlantic integration process. … The Alliance will continue to work closely with the Western Balkans to maintain and promote regional and international peace and security".[1]

This clearly demonstrates the vast importance the North Atlantic Alliance attributes to the cooperation in general in the Western Balkans.

Generally speaking, an increasing development of overall regional cooperation with the economic cooperation at its core always results in a real major process of confidence building among various countries and their respective populations. However, economic development by joint projects should be considered a cornerstone of regional long-term peace and security. Hence, the Berlin Process of the EU is so important and promising. Joint projects of economy are not only an efficient way of making use of the resources and building prosperity, but also a way for binding countries tightly together on the basis of sound common interests and complementarity that they generate among the countries.

In particular, the security and defense cooperation in the Western Balkans is being developed through many processes like SEDM, the Adriatic Charter, SEECP, and various bilateral and multilateral agreements and projects

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[1]   Warsaw Summit Declaration of head of State and Goverments, July 2016, p. 21.

of cooperation. Despite the positive climate of regional security and regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, this specific cooperation for security is indispensable as the security risks become more and more global and unpredictable. A lot of achievements have been made in the Western Balkans. They range from membership and partnership of Balkan countries in NATO to periodic joint military activities and joint NATO military missions abroad. These achievements also include mutual assistance during emergency situations, continuous consultations on military matters or security issues, experience sharing among the armed forces, numerous and frequent meetings among the high ranking military officers, etc. What else can be done in this respect? A lot more. The space of opportunities of further security cooperation is immeasurable and inexhaustible in the Western Balkans, whereas the efforts of trying to explore them must be never ending.

I would like to mention some ideas of mine in terms of this security cooperation even though they might not sound brand new. I consider them very important for the region and a substantial contribution to our regional and international security. They could also be seen as good opportunities for our security and defense cooperation.

First, allow me to say a few words on the need of an *accelerated Euro-Atlantic process of integration* in the Western Balkans. Such an accelerated process would bring the security cooperation among Balkan and other Euro-Atlantic countries to a new level. Almost two year ago, Montenegro received the invitation to NATO membership and it became a NATO member in June 2017. There should be no doubt at all that this membership will add to the regional security cooperation and beyond it, even for the very fact that Montenegro chose by its free will to be aligned with the NATO Alliance, among other things. Taking for granted that certain standards must be met for a country's NATO membership, an accelerated process of Euro-Atlantic integration of countries like Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo would immensely help the security situation and cooperation in the Western Balkans. An invitation to Macedonia to become a NATO member independently of its political dispute with Greece or speeding up a solution for this dispute over the name of Macedonia would be a relevant step forward in this respect which would have a strong positive impact for improving the inter-ethnic Albanian-Macedonian relations there, too.

Considering the EU membership as important as NATO membership for the security cooperation, the European Union should also find ways to accelerate the membership process of the Balkan countries into the union. The EU should refrain itself from viewing its membership criteria too meticulously just because as we all know from our experience there is no perfect completion of standards or criteria. Another idea I would like to add is that the EU should lose no more time in convincing some of its members, namely Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain, to recognize the Republic of Kosovo. Any further delay has an impact on the security cooperation we are talking about today.

Second, for more than 15 years, the *Balkan peoples have already shown that they are capable of constructing good, even excellent relations* in our region. However, it is a widespread fact that, despite the tremendous progress in terms of friendly relations and cooperation among the peoples and elites of the Western Balkan countries, there are still some remaining aggressive nationalist mentalities which whenever they are displayed, they are either in the form of short-lived social hysteria or seem to be intentionally used by certain political elites for concrete purposes. It is the duty of the political elites not to remain stuck to old paradigms of political action. Politicians cannot be guided by public nationalist opinions even when they are in electoral campaigns, but they must guide and teach them the new mentalities and ideas of a cooperating region free of negative nationalism of any kind. Politicians cannot be guided by double standards of political behaviour, an aggressive nationalist one to be used during electoral campaigns and another moderate political behaviour in the time between two elections. All of us may remember when some politicians say that they made this or that statement because of the electoral campaign meaning that they were not serious about it. Here, a question arises: Should they not also guide and teach the voters and the public in general with new mentalities and ideas of a cooperating region, free of negative nationalism of any kind?!

Third, there is a lot to be done by the intelligence services of the Western Balkan countries. They can use a lot of means in order not to allow security threats to impair the security situation of this region. It has always been said that strengthening the cooperation among intelligence agencies in the region is very important, but maybe the time has come to *eventually establish a regional center of intelligence* to better contribute in more successfully facing

the challenges of terrorism, radicalism, or other violent extremist acts of any kind. This is a difficult enterprise, but if it is supported with a concrete project and a clear legal mandate by the regional political elites, it could be a major step forward to a new level of security cooperation.

Fourth, there are the *arms control and confidence building* in the Balkan region, which more or less go in pair together. This is another important area for security cooperation in the Western Balkans. Apart from the related mechanisms of the OSCE, other local mechanisms should be established so that trust and confidence among the very common people, political and military authorities in the Balkans are further improved and enhanced. And this is a process, as the building of trust and confidence would normally take more than one or two generations to become a solid reality in this region. Despite the great changes in the security environment in the Western Balkans, one could not say for sure that there is a perfect transparency in the arms control processes which, in turn, could serve to nourish people with second feelings imbued with negative nationalism.

Fifth, another dimension of security cooperation is *smart defense cooperation*. The Western Balkan is a part of the new global security environment that generates domestic and regional defense responsibilities for all its countries, NATO members, NATO partners, or NATO aspiring countries. Their defense responsibilities are mainly connected to the NATO Alliance and to the regional peace, stability and security. In a time of financial constraints when the need for better defense grows, the best solution seems to be the well-known smart defense. Pooling, sharing and joint procurements of defense capacities are an enormous resource of regional security cooperation to the benefit of shared defense capabilities. This clearly means less money and more defense. Many efforts have been made in our region, mainly in the framework of NATO, to progress with smart defense projects. However, the results remain incommensurate with these efforts. This could be used as a strong signal that there is a need for more political will in the support of this process. I consider this to be a very good chance not only for a better regional defense, but also for a deeper cohesion among the countries of the Western Balkans. The Western Balkans could very well prepare, train and offer joint military capacities and military personnel for both its regional and international defense and security.

Sixth, maybe it is at excess to repeat the necessity of a *more intensified political and specialized dialogue for security issues*. So far, there are numerous forms and mechanisms and forums of such a dialogue and they have served well. However, the global security environment has become even more complicated and the foreseeable future does not offer a promise for better times. In these circumstances, the need for dialogue and consultations becomes more and more necessary and it is not at all a routine as we are sometimes led to believe. Governmental and non-governmental agencies, experts, military personnel and politicians, media people and other stakeholders might constantly be in touch for consultations and other activities in this respect.

Finally, multiple and enormous means for maintaining and further developing the regional climate of the overall cooperation constitute the *media and the NGOs of the Western Balkans*. Through their very developed human connections, their huge impact on human mentality and peoples' psyche, their flow of opinion sharing, their concrete expertise on specific problems, they would further facilitate the cooperation for security. Joint projects as products of documented common political visions in the Western Balkans could add a lot to this positive climate of cooperation. In this respect, the so called principle of media that "bad news is good news" should not always serve as a guiding line.

I'm sure that there are many other ways of stimulating regional cooperation for security.

When we discuss security issues, of course the non-governmental organizations have very much to do, from informing the citizens to offering advice to the decision-makers, on a country basis or a regional one. It is maybe time for these organizations to establish regional groups, committees or caucuses for a more efficient, far-reaching and dynamic activity. A primary role here seems to pertain to those that mainly deal with security issues.

Impediments to the Western Balkan's Security Cooperation

Despite the great changes in its security environment, the Western Balkan still remains a geographical space where various risks or problems to its peace, stability and security exist. Whatever the nature of these security problems or risks, even if it is not war they can create concern in the region

and for its people and they deserve appropriate attention by all the societal actors, official or unofficial ones. We should never forget the lessons coming from the Balkan's history of the last century which has clearly evidenced that unpredicted or unexpected breaks of peace and security in this region have brought about European wars. This security environment has, at least, a resulting negative impact on the security cooperation by creating various impediments to it. I believe it would be viewed as a weird paradox that the Western Balkan exports security to distant regions today, while at home it still remains stuck to some security problems mostly linked with its past history, but also with poor performance of state institutions or other influences from outside the region.

Now, I will mention some of the issues which, in my opinion, might be viewed as impediments to the Western Balkans security cooperation.

Firstly, there are the above mentioned *scattered remaining aggressive nationalistic mentalities in the Balkans* which influence the various inter-ethnic relations like Albanian-Serbian and Albanian-Macedonian relations respectively in Kosova and Macedonia, inter-ethnic Bosnian-Serbian relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Macedonian-Greek dispute over the name of Macedonia or inter-ethnic relations in general. I would like to stress once more that these aggressive nationalist mentalities of the Balkan region seem to be connected with parts of the political elites. Sometimes the impression arises that the political elites of the region are much more dependent on the old nationalist mentalities than the common people. And sometimes, as we all know very well, these old nationalist mentalities can even make one think they could be the cause of several innocent human victims. We can denote many indicators of these old nationalist mentalities in our region, but it is essential that these mentalities are to be eradicated by all the available means, from education to political activity. This is a long battle, but this is the way to never allowing any kind of possible revival in the future. This is the way to never lose more time in the common efforts to making this region prosperous and secure in a synergistic form of activities. The main guiding principle in the relations of ethnically different Balkan nations should be "Absolute respect for all our national identities as Western Balkan's great wealth".

Secondly, another set of problems which heavily influence the security are those connected to the rule of law like *organized crime, corruption, weaknesses of democratic institutions such as justice system*, etc. As Deputy Secretary General Alexander Vershbow said in Krakow, on March 4th of this year:

> "Our first line of defense is not troops or heavy weapons, but effective governance: institutions that are – and that are seen to be – on the side of the citizen. Every member of the NATO Alliance is committed to our values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. We must all continue to invest in those values every day …"[2]

This message is quite clear that bad governance institutions erode the country's security and defense capacity and unfortunately, we have a lot of problems of this type in our region. I would only refer to my country Albania where the old problem of corruption in the justice system and among politicians has taken the dimensions of a plague. Now, in my country Albania, a very heated debate is still continuing on the reform of the justice system and fortunately it has produced some results in terms of a new legal framework, but it still remains to be seen how the new laws will be implemented and how the culture of impunity for high officials will eventually be uprooted. In the meantime, the expectation of the Albanian population for this reform is very, very high. And if this justice reform should fail, which will not be the case I hope, one can imagine what this would mean for a people with such high expectations, namely reactions from deep delusion from the democratic system to random violent outbursts against the political elite. I would add here that, in such circumstances, other influences from outside Albania and the Western Balkans might try to enter in play. Of course, such situations damage the cooperation for security.

I'm sure this type of problem is linked with corruption and organized crime and the functioning of democratic institutions does not only exist in Albania, but also in the region. However, this situation could be used as a strong catalyst for regional security cooperation. As a matter of fact this is a process which is presently being developed in the region.

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[2] Alexander Vershbow, Speech at the Foundation Institute for Strategic Studies, Krakow, 04 March 2016.

Thirdly, there are also *various persisting political problems* which may turn into security problems. For example, the continuing exacerbated political debate which has been going on for many years and on various political issues in my country Albania. Time and time again it threatens the stability of my country as we saw it in the years 1997, 1998 and 2011. No one can say that during those developments the security cooperation could function normally for Albania and that the possible counterpart countries in the region normally think of any cooperation for security. Unfortunately this political polarization continues to persist now.

Some months ago, we have been watching similar political problems in Macedonia caused by the declaration of amnesty by the President of the Republic for politicians who were under investigation and the following mass protests. That political situation in Macedonia lasted for several months and it could have generated a deterioration of the security situation if joined with other existing inter-ethnic problems there. We can see indications of similar problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo as well.

In a very recent study on the Black Sea region by the New Strategy Center of Romania and Hudson Institute of USA we can read:

> "Recent developments in the Balkans, further augmented by the migration crisis, also give rise to legitimate concern in this context. The Dayton Accords, which put an end to the wars in former Yugoslavia, have served their purpose but also generated some unintended consequences that may still acquire an explosive potential. The prospect of eventual accession to the European Union that was extended to the eastern Balkan nations has so far concentrated mainly on transitional aspects such as approximation of laws and building capacity for better governance, while paying less attention to the still unresolved political issues and underlying tensions."[3]

I dare say that for as long as policymaking in our region is not seen as a mere political competition of ideas but more as a means of holding on to political power at any cost, this could result in an impediment for our security cooperation. The reason for this is very simple, because it seems that political elites are more interested in their narrow political interests than in

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[3] Why Black Sea Matters, study by New Strategy Center of Romania and Hudson Institute of USA, p.13.

common interests and it does not matter if they are the common interests inside or outside a country.

Fourthly, as is already well-known, the *international behavior of Russia* in violation of the international law and agreements in Moldova, Georgia, Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, has turned into a possible security risk to the Balkans.

In the same recent study on the Black Sea region, it is said:

> "In fact, Russia seems to have acquired a strategic place d'armes for further incursions in its 'near abroad', seen this time in a broader sense to include the Balkans, Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant. Available evidence suggests, in addition to threatening the sovereignty of Ukraine, Georgia and Republic of Moldova, an intent to control navigation in the Black Sea maritime space, to protect Russia's communication lines and energy transportation routes, to intimidate NATO members Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and to interdict the access of NATO forces to the Black Sea."[4]

This behavior of Russia coupled with the so-called "hybrid war" for influence in the Balkans constitutes another impediment to our security cooperation. The accession of Montenegro in NATO is one "lost battle" for Russia, but the truth is that this "hybrid war" continues and other "invisible battles" are looming.

Finally, although there are *other regional security risks* such as ethnic disputes, illicit trafficking, terrorism, the refugee crisis, natural disasters, the influence of Islamic radicalism, etc., which by damaging the security in the region might bring forth complicated situations which also damage the cooperation for security.

I would like to conclude by saying that chances of and impediments to security cooperation are very closely interlinked. Where there are chances, there are also impediments to be settled and where impediments persist, the chances seem to be missed out.

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[4] Why Black Sea Matters, study by New Strategy Center of Romania and Hudson Institute of USA, p. 8.

PART II:

INTERNATIONAL VIEWS ON THE SECURITY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

U.S. Views on Montenegrin Accession to NATO[1]

Craig Nation

The Role of NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has a clear and consistent definition of its goals and purpose. NATO is first of all a military alliance whose aim is to protect the territory and populations of its members against armed attack. This primary mission is ensured through collective defense commitments defined by Article V of the Washington Treaty. It is also a multilateral political association that strives to sustain a *security community* through the promotion of cooperative security.[2] Article IV of the Washington Treaty ensures consultation on security matters of common interest. Not least, NATO is an alliance of values, committed to the imperatives of democratic governance.

The emphasis on values, as well as on other long-standing commitments, is summarized in the opening paragraph of the Alliance's 2016 *Warsaw Summit Communiqué* that, among other things, confirms a formal invitation to Montenegro to become its 29th member.

NATO's essential mission is unchanged: to ensure that the Alliance remains an unparalleled community of freedom, peace, security, and shared values, including individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. We are united in our commitment to the Washington Treaty, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN), and the vital transatlantic bond. To protect and defend our indivisible security and our common values, the Alliance must and will continue fulfilling ef-

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[1]　The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the perspectives of the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army.

[2]　The concept of security community was initially developed in Deutsch, Karl: Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

fectively all three core tasks as set out in the Strategic Concept: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security. These tasks remain fully relevant, are complementary, and contribute to safeguarding the freedom and security of all Allies.[3]

The Alliance's definition of security has expanded, from the original focus on an overarching Soviet threat, to out of area commitments such as those in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Libya, to new security threats including cyber security, counter terrorism, criminal trafficking, and others. NATO is a defensive alliance that has no hostile intentions is not configured to undertake aggression. Article V mentions no enemies by name – not the Soviet Union or any other global adversary.

During the cold war decades NATO maintained an "out of area" limitation that placed a geographical frame around its area of responsibility. Beyond the Cold War, NATO has become a global security actor involved in projecting stability and enhancing international security through external engagement. It defines itself as an alliance whose primary mission is to promote peace and security on the world stage, within the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond its confines as well.

The U.S. and NATO

In 2012, on the eve of the Alliance's Chicago summit, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Philip Gordon offered the observation that "NATO is vital to U.S. security" as "the mechanism through which the United States confronts diverse and difficult threats to our security together with like-minded states who share our fundamental values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law."[4] U.S. Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder asserted in 2011 that it is "an alliance that is more needed by more people than ever."[5] President Barack Obama describes it as "the most suc-

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[3] Warsaw Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Press Release 2016-100, 9 July 2016.
[4] Gordon, Philip H.: Why NATO Matter to U.S. Security. In: DipNotes, U.S. Department of State, 14 May 2012.
[5] Daalder, Ivo: Who Needs NATO? We All Do. In: International Herald Tribune, 17

cessful alliance in human history."[6] Many such attestations can be cited. They summarize a consensus within the U.S. foreign and security policy establishment, where NATO is viewed as the U.S.'s most important international commitment and its stability defined as a vital national interest. NATO ensures the defense and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area, including most of the U.S.'s most important allies. It represents U.S. values internationally. More pragmatically, the Alliance provides a platform for forward basing and power projection, not least toward the turbulent Middle East. NATO gives the U.S. leverage in European security and political affairs that it cannot reproduce in other channels. The Alliance makes decisions by consensus, but America's significant influence is not disputed. Washington provides a large percentage of the Alliance's budget.[7] Domestically, commitment to the Alliance is sometimes described as a political "third rail." Anyone questioning its importance will quickly be denied the stature of a serious and responsible analyst.

The elite consensus has on occasion been challenged, but without notable effect. The Obama Administration's flamboyantly announced "pivot" to East Asia seemed to some to relativize the U.S. commitment to Europe in general and NATO in particular. The policy created some degree of concern among European allies, and Washington has been at pains to play down the implications ever since.[8] Presidential candidate Donald Trump raised hackles in the Summer of 2016 by expressing concern over the lack of burden sharing within the Alliance, citing "conditions" for the U.S. de-

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June 2011.

[6] Obama, President Barack: Europe and America: Aligned for the Future. In: International Herald Tribune, 19 November 2010.

[7] The U.S. accounts for approximately 72% of NATO members' total military expenditures, including 22% of the Alliance's common military expenses. Defence Expenditures of NATO Countries (2008-2016). NATO Public Diplomacy Division Press Release, Communiqué PR/CP (2016) 11, 28 January 2016.

[8] Campbell, Kurt/Andrews, Brian: Explaining the U.S. "Pivot" to Asia. London: Chatham House, August 2013 describes the intent. Sverdrup-Tygeson, Bjørnar/Lanteigne, Marc/Sverdrup, Ulp: For Every Action: The American Pivot to Asia and Fragmented European Responses (with a response from Thomas Wright and Will Moreland). Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, January 2016, look at European reactions.

fense commitment to allies, and questioning NATO's enduring relevance for U.S. national security interests.[9] The burden sharing issue is of course not new, and certainly not uniquely a function of presidential campaigning, but Trump's more daring assertions have been widely and compellingly refuted.[10] Naysayers to the contrary, NATO remains at the center of the U.S. global security posture.

Montenegro's Accession to NATO

NATO's "Open Door Policy" rests on Article X of the North Atlantic Treaty, which states that membership is open to any "European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area" when supported by the unanimous consent of existing members.[11] The U.S. has always considered this provision to be a critical foundation for mobilizing Europe around a collective and transatlantic defense and security posture. Montenegro is judged to have "clearly and demonstrably" met the necessary standards. In December 2015 allied foreign ministers unanimously agreed to invite Montenegro to join the Alliance. Montenegro's Parliament passed a resolution on membership with a two-thirds majority in June 2016, which is regarded as a sufficient demonstration of democratic intent. In May 2016 the Accession Protocol was signed, which now must be ratified by all 28 members. To date (as of September 2016) eight members have ratified the Protocol (Iceland, Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Albania, Poland, and Turkey). U.S. Senate ratification is expected. The Obama administration has gone to some lengths to muster support.

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[9] Sanger, David E. and Haberman, Maggie: Donald Trump Sets Conditions for Defending NATO Allies Against Attack. In: The New York Times, 20 July 2016.

[10] In 2011 U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that NATO confronted a "dim if not dismal future" if allies were unwilling to increase military spending to mandated levels. Shanker, Thom: Defense Secretary Warns NATO of 'Dim' Future. In: The New York Times, 10 June 2011. However his judgment of Donald Trump as "willfully ignorant about the rest of the world" has been unequivocal. Gates, Robert M.: Sizing Up the Next Commander-in-Chief. In: The Wall Street Journal, 16 September 2016.

[11] NATO Enlargement & Open Door. In: North Atlantic Treaty Organization Fact Sheet – Public Diplomacy Division, July 2016.

Some U.S. commentators have questioned Montenegro's eligibility, and desirability, as a NATO ally. Their concerns are familiar, often mirroring the observations of opposition parties within Montenegro itself. These concerns include the observation that Montenegro still suffers from corruption incommensurate with the responsibilities of membership, concern over control of weapons stocks inherited from the former Yugoslav army, the activity of criminal networks involved in trafficking and other violations, lack of convincing popular support, unresolved ethnic tensions within Montenegrin society, and the potential impact of accession upon relations with the Russian Federation. According to this critical perspective Montenegro's limited military capacity will not allow it to contribute in any meaningful way to European or U.S. security. In the event of general war, some argue, it could well become a liability.[12]

The U.S. position refutes these claims categorically. In testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on 17 September 2016, U.S. State Department Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Hoyt Brian Yee made the case that Montenegrin accession to NATO would be uniformly beneficial for Montenegro, the South East European sub-region, the Alliance, and the U.S. Over the years, he argued, Podgorica has systematically progressed toward meeting the criteria for membership, including "serious steps in the fight against organized crime and corruption." It has worked to implement reforms in the defense intelligence and security sectors. It has also contributed to NATO as a security provider, sending small contingents to participate in numerous missions including those in Afghanistan, Mali, Liberia, Somalia, and Cyprus.[13] Montenegrin defense spending, currently at 1.7 percent of GDP, is still below NATO's 2 percent standard, but is targeted to rise to meet that standard by 2024. At the same session U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Michael Carpenter testified that Montenegro had made itself "a stable multi-ethnic country that has implemented serious reforms in the security sector, the

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[12] Jost, Zakary: NATO Does not Need Montenegro's Teeny-Tiny Military. In: The National Interest, 28 June 2016.

[13] U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations: NATO Expansion: Examining the Accession of Montenegro. Testimony by Hoyt Brian Yee and Michael Carpenter. 17 September 2016.

rule of law and institution building," with "stable armed forces, trans-formed according to NATO standards."[14] In sum, although the momentum of reform needs to be continued, Montenegro is acknowledged to have met the three key criteria for future members – it is a European state, it is in a position to further the principles of the Alliance, and it has demonstrated the capacity to contribute positively to the security of the North Atlantic area. Both Yee and Carpenter strongly recommend Senate ratification of the Montenegrin Accession Protocol.

In addition to meeting Article X criteria, Montenegro is considered to be in a position to make positive contributions to U.S. national security interests. These include the good example of diligence in pursuit of democratic re-form provided for other countries in the Balkans (where Bosnia and Her-zegovina and the Republic of Macedonia are in the process of working through Membership Action Plans), and also other NATO partners. It makes a contribution to the long-standing U.S. goal of promoting a "Eu-rope whole and free." Accession can serve as a positive example in other ways as well. No states have acceded to the Alliance since Croatia and Al-bania in 2008. Montenegro's accession will therefore serve to reconfirm, after a hiatus, the permanent and enduring quality of the Open Door Policy as a part of NATO's doctrinal foundation. In a Europe increasingly torn by economic dilemmas, regional conflict, migration pressure, terrorist threats, and institutional disillusion, the stability, integrity, and attractiveness of the Alliance may be regarded as a useful asset looking forward.

The potential for a Montenegro anchored in NATO to make meaningful contributions to regional security and stability is also a factor. The Balkan region has been a major victim of the negative trends referenced above, and here again the Montenegrin example can have a positive demonstration effect in reinforcing regional stability. In conversation with Montenegrin President Milo Djukanović, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden described Monte-negro's NATO membership as "a significant milestone in integrating the Balkans into Euro-Atlantic institutions" that will "contribute to stability,

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14   Ibid.

security, and prosperity in the Balkans."[15] Not least, Montenegro has taken a strong stand in support of U.S. led sanctions against the Russian Federation and in resisting Moscow's efforts to bolster its influence in South East Europe and in Europe as a whole. These initiatives have been appreciated, and are very much in line with U.S. priorities. Washington is determined to assert the principle that a choice for association with the Alliance is a sovereign right, and that "third party interference" with the exercise of that right will not be tolerated. Finally, though Montenegro's armed forces are too small to make a meaningful contribution in the event of the worst-case scenario of a major war, the country's geostrategic position, on the Adriatic littoral and straddling the fault line between Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East, will always be of strategic relevance.

The issue of the effect of accession upon relations with the Russian Federation is a contested one. Podgorica has cooperated with U.S. efforts to allay concerns about Russian aggression among NATO allies through the European Reassurance Initiative, and to impose counter-pressure upon the Russian Federation in view of the violent and still unresolved standoff in Ukraine.[16] Podgorica has joined with the U.S. and EU sanctions regime directed against the Russian Federation, made statements condemning Russia's actions, and turned down Moscow's request for access to the port of Bar which would permit vessels from the Russian Mediterranean Squadron to refuel and perform maintenance functions.

On 12 July 2016 President Djukanović made a statement of protest against Russian opposition to accession, describing it as dangerous propaganda by those "stuck in the jaws of the retrograde past."[17] Russian Foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakhariova, in effect reinforcing Western concerns, responded grimly to Djukanović's remarks, asserting that: "the current Mon-

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[15] Readout of Vice President Biden's Call With Montenegrin Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic. The White House – Office of the Vice-President, Washington, D.C., 17 December 2015.
[16] Cancian Mark F. and Samp, Lisa Sawyer.: The European Reassurance Initiative. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 9 February 2016.
[17] Cited by Rettman, Andrew: EU Warned of Russian 'Peril' in Western Balkans. In: EU Observer, 12 July 2016.

tenegrin authorities will bear full responsibility for the consequences of their anti-Russian stance."[18]

Many parties have seized on the opportunity to interpret accession as a slap in the face to the Russian bear, as well as a rebuke to its regional aspirations. In its statement of support for the Accession Protocol the Polish *Sejm* remarked that the Montenegrin membership in the Alliance would place significant limitations on "Russian influence in the Western Balkans." On 20 July 2016 a statement signed by a group of U.S. senior officials, including former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, and former SACEURs General Philip Breedlove and Admiral James Stavridis, urged the U.S. to approve accession by 2017 as a repost to Russia and as a contribution to regional stability in South-eastern Europe.[19] In response, the Russian State Duma addressed a statement to the parliamentary assemblies of NATO and OSCE countries, as well as to the national parliaments of the Balkan states, warning of the possibility of increased social and political tensions within Montenegro and "a new Cold War" with the West.[20] Michael Carpenter's remarks to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations include the assertion that Montenegrin accession will provide "a powerful rebuke to Russia's malign influence in the Western Balkans."[21]

Such rhetoric has moved into the mainstream of current U.S. foreign policy discourse, but it need not be interpreted as a formal exposition of the U.S. position on the process of NATO enlargement. Montenegrin accession has not been generated as a "punishment" or "message" to Moscow. It is better understood as the logical culmination of a lengthy process of reform and preparation. The accession process was launched well before a disintegration of East-West relations such as we are now experiencing was any-

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[18] Cited in Russia Warns Montenegro that it Will Bear 'Full Responsibility. In: b92, 14 July 2016.

[19] Open Letter to President Obama and the U.S. Congress Urging Quick Action on Montenegro's Accession to NATO. In: War On the Rocks, 20 June 2016.

[20] Knezevic, Gordana: Russian Anxiety Over Montenegro's NATO Accession. In: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 26 June 2016.

[21] U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations: NATO Expansion: Examining the Accession of Montenegro. Testimony by Hoyt Brian Yee and Michael Carpenter. 17 September 2016.

where on the horizon. Montenegro joined the Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 2006, and in that same year inaugurated a State Partnership Program with the U.S. Maine National Guard. A wide range of programs sponsored by the PfP and the U.S. Army were undertaken to address the challenges of civil-military relations, military reform, and national security priorities.[22] The Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Montenegro, approved in 2007, articulates a clear commitment to "European and Euro-Atlantic integrations." An Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) was issued in 2008, a Membership Action Plan (MAP) in 2008, and in 2010, with the U.S.-Russian "Reset" agenda underway, Montenegro's first Annual National Program for defense reform was launched.

Montenegro's accession may be in line with efforts to oppose a Russian threat to Europe, but that has never been its *raison d'être*. Nor should it be. The Russian problem is not a preoccupation for the citizens of Montenegro, who in national polls consistently list issues relating to social stability, employment, the quality of life, corruption and good governance as overriding concerns. It is in these areas, not the controversial issue of relations with Moscow, where NATO accession has the greatest potential to make positive contributions looking forward. In fact, despite its current difficulties with the Russian Federation, the U.S. continues to aspire to positive relations based on mutual respect, shared interests, and a commitment to common principles and values. Likewise, and despite numerous caveats, NATO's Secretary General has asserted that the Alliance aspires to a "cooperative relationship" in areas where common ground exists, and that it is "essential that we engage constructively with Russia."[23] The U.S. and NATO remain committed to a nuanced policy towards Russia that allows for appropriate responses to aggressive behavior, but simultaneously remains open to collaboration. An appropriate balance of deterrence and

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[22] For an example of such efforts see the evaluation by Griffard, Bernard F. and Nation, R. Craig: Promoting Joint Staff and Interagency Cooperation in the Armed Forces of Montenegro. Carlisle Barracks: Center for Strategic Leadership, March 2011.

[23] Cited from the interview Stoltenberg, Jens: NATO Responds to Russia's Aggression against Ukraine. In: *TASS*, 20 June 2016, and Stoltenberg, Jens: NATO and Russia: Balancing Defense with Dialogue. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 16 July 2016.

engagement will be difficult to find, but the effort remains a foundation for policy.[24]

Security and Stability in South East Europe

The security environment in South East Europe has changed dramatically in the aftermath of the wars that accompanied the disintegration of the Yugoslav state during the 1990s. Military threats generated from within the region have declined in salience, though they have not been totally eliminated. National intolerance and inter-communal rivalry remain problems that include the possibility of conflict, and the region continues to produce localized outbreaks of armed violence. South-eastern Europe, defined broadly, contains several *de facto* state-entities whose legitimacy is challenged, including the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, then Republic of Transnistria, and Kosovo. Secessionist aspirations have been articulated by forces within the Republika Srbska in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Sanjak region of Serbia and Montenegro, Vojvodina in Serbia, and parts of the Republic of Macedonia. The region has been the source of a certain number of volunteer so-called foreign fighters to the Islamic State campaign in Iraq and Syria, and there is concern for the impact that they might have upon regional security if they should eventually return home. However, the most pressing sources of instability are represented by new, non-military security threats, including the challenges of good governance, entrenched corruption, criminal trafficking, environmental disintegration, and the failure of modernization and development initiatives to address a legacy of unemployment and poverty.

During the Cold War, South East Europe was divided between members of NATO, members of the Warsaw Pact, and the non-aligned national communist regimes in Yugoslavia and Albania. As such it counted as a fault line in cold war competition, though in practice the geopolitical context was relatively benign. Today most of the region is seeking to reorient toward European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. However, the revival of

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[24] Hill, Fiona: Understanding and Deterring Russia. Testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee on Russia's Foreign Policy and Security Challenges. Washington, D.C.: The Brooking Institution, 10 February 2016.

Russian power and ambition has led to a reanimation of strategic rivalry. South-eastern Europe's strategic relevance has been enhanced by competition over energy transfer corridors, and open-ended conflict in the adjacent Middle East. Russian leverage in the region, exerted through cultural ties, investment, and energy transfers, is regarded by some as a major emerging security threat.[25]

The EU is the institution best placed to promote political and economic resilience in the new South-eastern Europe, but internal division and unexpected challenges, such as those posed by the UK's *Brexit* decision, have reduced its capacity for effective action. The European malaise marked by growing economic disparity, the refugee dilemma, an aggravated threat of terrorism, the rise national populist movements, institutional frustration, and a heightened sense of a "threat from the East" seems to have put a continued dynamic of EU enlargement in to the back burner for the foreseeable future. Institutional Europe is the logical home for all of the Yugoslav successor states, but it is not clear that it will be able to fulfill what might be called a historic obligation. NATO, on the other hand, remains well positioned to make positive contributions in addressing security challenges that are relevant to Europe as a whole.

Montenegro's accession to the NATO alliance should reinforce South-eastern Europe's evolving security structures and enable progress is many ways. In regard to both traditional and new security concerns the NATO alliance, working with rather than against other interested parties, can contribute quite a lot. The potential sources of future wars or communal violence can only be eliminated within a functioning security community where existential threats have been reduced or marginalized. The region's most pressing concerns are non-military threats, but traditional physical security is a prerequisite for addressing these concerns. In this key sector NATO is uniquely well placed to contribute.

With Montenegrin accession, NATO's profile in South East Europe will become more robust. Greece and Turkey have been members since 1952,

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[25] Is Russia Seizing the Western Balkans from the EU? Democracy and Security in Southeastern Europe, Special Edition. Vol. 5, Issue 1/2, November/December 2014.

Slovenia joined in 2004, and Albania and Croatia in 2008. Montenegro's non-attached status between its immediate neighbors to the north and south has in fact been somewhat incongruous. Closing the gap will facilitate cooperation along the Adriatic littoral in regard to issues such as maritime security, counter trafficking, and consequence management. Relations with Serbia should also be enhanced. Although it has a constitutionally mandated commitment to neutrality, Belgrade is pursuing a positive relationship with the Alliance. Serbia joined the Partnership for Peace program in 2006, and in 2015 inaugurating an Individual Partnership Action Plan – the highest level of cooperation between the Alliance and a country not aspiring to join.[26] Podgorica's successful conclusion of the accession process could provide encouragement for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia to continue to pursue reform – a point that is regularly asserted in U.S. support for the momentum of enlargement. The issues that block accession in the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Macedonia – domestic dysfunction in the first case and the "name issue" with Greece in the second – are not under NATO's purview. However by reinforcing regional security the Alliance can make some kind of consensual resolution to these problems more feasible.

NATO's greatest contributions to security in the Balkans may lie in its ability to replicate some of the achievements of the post-World War II era in Western Europe. From 1949 onward NATO was first of all an instrument of collective defense, but it was also more than that. The North Atlantic Council was constituted as a venue for political consultation and dialogue. It provided a sense of community within which the scars of war were allowed to heal, and where the legacy of interstate competition could yield to cooperation. Today NATO plays, and can continue to play, a similar role in the post-war environment of South East Europe. No clear and present danger is required for this process to move forward. Russia's influence in the region is not likely to go away, and, one could argue, it need not be considered "malign." The power of NATO, ideally used to contribute to resolution scenarios for the crises in Ukraine and Syria, and perhaps embodied in the revival and enhanced functionality of the NATO-Russian

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[26] Vasovic, Aleksandar: With Russia as an Ally, Serbia Edges toward NATO. In: Reuters World News, 3 July 2016.

Council, could help to reverse such perceptions and channel Russian engagement in a mutually beneficial direction.

Montenegro's success in navigating the process of transformation that has led it to the doorstep of the Atlantic Alliance should prove beneficial to its own population first of all. Podgorica will become a full member of a functioning Euro-Atlantic security community. It will be (in fact has become) a pro-active member within alliance councils with a voice in deciding security decisions in regard to which it has a vital interest. Its national security will be enhanced, creating a more attractive environment for external investment and engagement. Regional stability will be reinforced, reducing the likelihood of external threats "spilling over" into the national sanctuary. The capacity to manage the challenges of natural disasters, an issue of considerable importance, will be strengthened. Association with NATO's alliance of values should contribute to the state's capacity to address the primary challenges of modernization, democratization, and development. In all of these ways Montenegro's good example will provide positive inspiration for other regional players.

Montenegro will be joining an alliance engaged in a process of open-ended transformation imposed by the changing nature of global security itself. All of the states of South-eastern Europe, including members, associated parties, and outsiders, stand to benefit from this process. As a member in good standing, Montenegro will be well positioned to help shape it.

NATO Membership for the Wrong Purpose[1]

Oleg Ivanov

Montenegro's decision to join NATO should be regarded in the broad European security context. In order to get a better insight into what the European security situation is like in general and in the Balkans in particular, it is advisable to look at other regions making a brief comparison analysis.

According to some experts' assessments, the Pacific region is the one where the traditional geopolitical approach is appropriate. There is a traditional balance of power landscape. On the whole, the model is based on the deterrence of adversaries and assurance of allies and partners as well as traditional military contingency planning. This is the model which is familiar and understandable to all policy-makers as the world had been living with it during the Cold War period.

As for the Middle East, to a great extent it is the opposite. It is the complete destruction of states and institutions and governance in general as a result of internal weakness and unreasonable external intervention of outside powers. In this case the traditional geopolitical balance of power approach will not work. The use of military force should be limited, precise and reasonable. According to the wise observation of the situation there made by the US General Martin E. Dempsey "if you're not careful (the use of force), far more likely to have an opposite of your intended effect".[2] As a conceptual basis the chaos theory will be more useful to explain the turbulence in the region.

What about Europe? Some experts believe that Europe is somewhere in the middle between the situation in the Pacific and the Middle East. There is a growing trend towards traditional geopolitics, containment and deter-

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[1] The views expressed in the article belong to the author and may not coincide with the position of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[2] http://www.jcs.mil/Media/Speeches/Article/571964/gen-dempsey-remarks-at-the-aspen-security-forum-2014/.

rence, the expansion of traditional political and military alliance like NATO which means a return to classical strategic thinking and action. At the same time there are asymmetric threats created by the flow of the illegal migration and international terrorism.

In this context of traditional and Cold War approach one should regard such statements as made by the Polish Foreign Minister Vitold Vaschikovsky in May 2016 who claimed that "time has come to refuse from cooperation with Moscow on international problems resolution and to return to 'the traditional methods' of the NATO-member territories defense". He also offered to go back to the strategic and geopolitical thinking to normal, traditional methods of defense of member-states by military presence.[3] Obviously, NATO is moving in this direction. Being a part of NATO any country will have to play by such rules. If this trend takes the upper hand in the long-term prospective it would be detrimental and harmful to all countries in Europe no matter where they are located because it would mean going back to the Cold War which any reasonable person does not desire.

What should we do to avoid going back to the Cold War? First of all, it is necessary to change the tone of our communication and to refrain from the demonization of each other. Henry Kissinger is absolutely right saying that Putin's demonization by the West is not a policy but the alibi for its absence. Second, it is desirable to work out a balanced approach which was offered by the former US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter. In particular, he said,

> "The balanced part is we continue to work with Russia, because you cannot paint all their behavior with one brush. There are places where they are working with us: in counterterrorism in many important respects, in some respects, with respect to North Korea, in some respects with respect to Iran and elsewhere".[4]

In order to work out a balanced and rational approach it is advisable to identify real threats and challenges that Europe faces today. Evidently, Russia is not a threat to Europe. The most immanent and serious threats are

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3   http://www.utro.ru/articles/2016/05/13/1281998.shtml.
4   Wong K. Pentagon chief: Russia is a "very significant threat"//The Hill, August 20, 2015. http://thehill.com/policy/defense/251622-pentagon-chief-russia-is-a-very-very-significant-threat.

nontraditional like international terrorism, ISIL, illegal migration and WMD proliferation and they are coming from the south. In May 2015 General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff clearly indicated "My personal advice to my fellow [chiefs of defense] in NATO is that the southern flank of NATO deserves far more attention than it currently receives from NATO". "Yet the issues that are emulating into the southern flank from the Middle East and North Africa could quite profoundly change life inside … not only southern Europe, but well into Central and Northern Europe."[5]

Our urgent task is to stabilize the situation in the Middle East and this goal can hardly be achieved without Russia. Our joint work should be aimed at uniting our efforts to fight terrorism, to coordinate our activity and to avoid conflicts among us.

Can NATO ensure safety from these threats? As for international terrorism it is doubtful that NATO membership gives protection. The terrible terrorist acts occurred in Belgium and France, in two NATO countries. By the way, it is noteworthy that the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove stressed that 90% of responsibility lied with member-states and only 10% go to common European structures.[6] So NATO membership does not guarantee safety from terrorism. What we need is a broader cooperation which goes beyond NATO and involves Russia and possibly such organization as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Unfortunately, NATO canceled its cooperation with Russia in this field. In particular, fulfilling the sanction campaign NATO closed the Standex project which was a major and mutually beneficial part of this cooperation. This step did not strengthen the security of both Russia and Europe. Terrorists do not impose sanctions on each other. So it is unlikely that in this respect Montenegro will benefit from joining NATO. As far as protection from terrorism is concerned without developing cooperation with Russia terrorists will have more chances to commit their crimes.

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[5] http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122290.
[6] http://www.mid.ru/evropejskij-souz-es/-/asset_publisher/6OiYovt2s4Yc/content/id/2196858.

TERROR THREAT ON TOURIST HOTSPOTS

LOW THREAT UNDERLYING THREAT GENERAL THREAT HIGH THREAT

Source: https://www.google.ru/search?q=international+terrorism+middle+east&new
window=1&biw=1920&bih=925&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiY6-
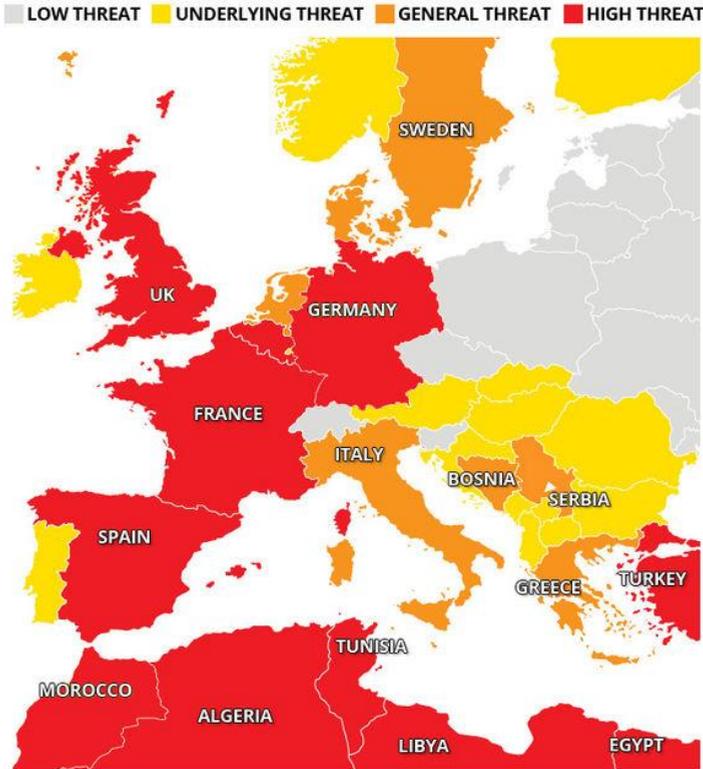
As for illegal migration which flooded Europe from the Middle East it is
still at the top of the security agenda in Europe. To a great extent the EU
keeps away from resolving the most urgent international security issues in
the Middle East. The same goes for NATO. The most active players there
are Russia, Turkey and the US. Is NATO capable of dealing with asymmet-
ric threats like illegal migration? According to the current NATO's Strate-
gic Concept:

> "NATO has a unique and robust set of political and military capabilities to address
> the full spectrum of crises-before, during and after conflicts. NATO will actively
> employ an appropriate mix of those political and military tools to help manage de-
> veloping crises that have the potential to affect Alliance security, before they esca-
> late into conflicts; to stop ongoing conflicts where they affect Alliance security; and

to help consolidate stability in post-conflict situations where that contributes to Euro-Atlantic security".[7]

Was NATO's set of robust capabilities effective to deal with the crisis in the Middle East which affects Alliance security? Did NATO stop ongoing conflict there or help consolidate stability? Basically, NATO proved to be little effective in dealing with the Middle East crisis and illegal migration to Europe. So in this respect it is unclear what Montenegro will benefit joining NATO.

Syrians in neighbouring countries and Europe

Source: UNHCR

Source: https://www.google.ru/search?q=refugees+in+europe+2016&newwindow=1& biw=1920&bih=925&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjc_5Gn9NLPAh XoHJoKHUWABWEQ_AUICCgD#imgrc=BKGZz31MHAX9JM%3A

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[7] Strategic Concept for the Defense and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2010, p. 7-8.

However, there is a room for cooperation in this field. Both Russia and Montenegro could establish cooperation with the modernized European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex). The most promising areas are risk analysis, information systems and exchange of information on environment. Frontex works closely with the border authorities of the non EU or Schengen countries. Mainly, these are the countries which are identified as states-sources or transit states for illegal migration. Russia could join this cooperation as well as we have a long-time experience in dealing with migrants.

As for the issue of Montenegro entering NATO there are some anxieties on the Russian part.

First, Montenegro entering NATO should be examined in the broad context beyond Montenegro itself. In Russia, the NATO expansion is regarded as a geopolitical project to push Russia out of the European security system. This is the trend that did not begin today but can be traced back to the 1990s. In particular, the US Senator Richard Lugar said in 1995,

> "Enlargement (NATO is meant) is linked to the US support for Bosnian Muslims, as well as Ukraine. These moves have been seen as part of a larger strategic design to consolidate the geostrategic gains of the Cold War at Russia's expense".[8]

Bearing in mind the fact that Russian-NATO relations are at their lowest point after the end of the Cold War, Montenegro will be pulled into the confrontation with Russia even against its will. It is possible to assume that NATO's goal is to weaken Russian-Montenegrin ties.

Second, Montenegro's authorities' decision should be based on the will of the people. In this regards, it is necessary to hold a country-wide referendum on entering NATO where all people would have an opportunity to express their view in a fully democratic way.

Third, NATO membership is not likely to strengthen Montenegro's national security. There is no outside traditional threat which NATO could

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[8]   Hearings Before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, US Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C., 1995.

help to repel. In fact, NATO is not an effective organization to deal with the real asymmetric threats that were described above. The most terrible terrorist acts occurred in NATO countries. As for dealing with illegal migration coming from the Middle East, basically NATO has been an out of business institution.

Fourth, in order to conduct NATO-led military operations it is not enough just to have military personnel. It is necessary to have advanced military hardware and technologies like C4I (command, control, communications, computation, and intelligence) to achieve necessary compatibility and cohesion. Montenegro will have to increase its defense budget to 2% of GDP to meet NATO's requirement. It is unlikely to give a boost to the economy and will not make the social and economic situation more prosperous in that country.

On the whole, Russia regards Montenegro's decision to join NATO as a confrontational move which has already affected our relations.

On the occasion of the Russian National Holiday 2015 in his message the former Prime-Minister Milo Đukanović assured Russian Prime-Minister Dmitri Medvedev that Montenegro's joining Euro Atlantic integration would not put an obstacle to the development of relations with partners and friends like Russia. Nevertheless, earlier in December of 2013 Montenegro's leadership rejected the Russian request to visit the port of Bar by Russian naval ships for logistic purpose. In November of 2014 that country did not vote for the resolution put forward by Russia denouncing Nazism and racism at the UN General Assembly. In 2015 President Filip Vujanović refused to visit Moscow to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the V-Day even though initially such agreement had been given.

The former Prime-Minister Đukanović accused Russia of allegedly arranging antigovernment disturbances for the purpose of the regime change. Russian MFA rejected such allegations asking for convincing evidence which was not presented.

In one of his interviews Đukanović said that Montenegro's joining NATO was beneficial for Russia as there will be one more friend in the alliance. At the same time in May of 2014 Montenegro imposed sanctions against Rus-

sia. This move is regarded as unfriendly because being out of NATO and the EU Montenegro could avoid doing that. Speaking in August 2015 about sanctions imposed on Russia the President of the Czech Republic Miloš Zeman held that sanctions were the sign of helplessness and they should be cancelled. In his turn the Slovakian Prime-Minister Robert Fico stated that sanctions were useless and harmful both for Europe and Russia. Montenegro's decision to join sanctions against Russia is a shoot in the leg. It does not hurt Russia economically but poisons bilateral relations and will backfire.

There is also an economic aspect involved. Russia and Montenegro have significant and mutually beneficial economic ties. In 2014 23.6% of all tourists visiting Montenegro came from Russia. They brought about 500 million euro which is two-third of all profit from tourism. Russian investments into service and Montenegro's real estate property are huge. Over 50,000 objects belong to Russians. The total volume of direct Russian investments is estimated as minimum 2 billion euro which is over one-fourth of all foreign investments in this country. It is likely that as a result of worsening bilateral political relations economic relations will also suffer in the future which is not good for both countries.

Therefore, despite claims that nothing will change in our bilateral relations the preparation for joining NATO has already begun to affect them. It means that our relations are highly likely to take another trajectory. On balance, by joining NATO Montenegro strives for the protection from a non-existent threat paying a steep price.

Both Russia and Montenegro are very close countries historically and culturally so it is not in our interests to go away from each other and to poison our relations. There is a nice Montenegrin proverb which says with Russia we are 200 million without it we are a half of the truck.

PART III:

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Recommendations[1]

Study Group Regional Stability in South East Europe

Executive Summary of Recommendations:

- Political parties from Montenegro: calm down the NATO accession issue after the elections – be as politically transparent as possible and stick to the democratic rules in line with the Montenegrin Constitution.
- Governments from South East Europe: enable more cooperation between the regional intelligence services in the fight against organized crime and terrorism.
- EU and NATO: use the dynamics in the NATO enlargement process to initiate a security dialogue between Belgrade and Priština/Prishtina.
- Belgrade and Priština/Prishtina: see such a security dialogue as a chance to substantially improve the security environment.
- NATO: use tools from the PfP to enhance the cooperation with Kosovo, even before its membership in the PfP.
- NATO: enhance the cooperation with Serbia in the scope of PfP.
- NATO: take a pro-active stance to overcome Macedonia's hurdles to become a member country.

Situation Analysis

Soon after regaining its independence on May 21 2006 Montenegro decided to take the Euro-Atlantic integration path. The integration into NATO

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[1] These policy recommendations reflect the findings of the 33rd RSSEE workshop on "Montenegro's upcoming NATO Membership-Internal, Regional and International Implications" convened by the PfP Consortium Study Group "Regional Stability in South East Europe", Austrian National Defence Academy, Vienna/Austria, Directorate General for Security Policy at the Austrian Ministry of Defence and Sports, Vienna/Austria and Atlantic Council of Montenegro, from September 22 to September 25 in Budva/Montenegro. They were prepared by Milena Savović, Atlantic Council of Montenegro.

and the EU became two main foreign policy goals. In November of the same year, relations between Montenegro and NATO became official after Montenegro received the invitation for accession to the Partnership for Peace Program (PfP) the military- political program of bilateral cooperation between partner countries and NATO. From that point on, Montenegro has achieved a lot. It has implemented numerous reforms in order to improve democratic standards. During 2007, Montenegro submitted the questionnaire on the Planning and Review Process (PARP). The following year, NATO approved the beginning of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) process for Montenegro which resulted in the invitation to implement the Membership Action Plan in December 2009.

Montenegro's Accession to NATO and its Possible Effects on Internal Stability

In 2009, Montenegro's Parliament decided in favour of allowing its soldiers to participate in international missions and operations. One year later, in 2010, Montenegro was recognized as the 44th non-NATO country contributor to the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. To the present day, 364 members of the Armed Forces of Montenegro, or 18% of the total active soldiers registered in the Armed Forces, have professionally served in international peace and stability missions.

The Armed Forces and the entire defence sector need to be adapted to the new strategic and security landscape, as well as the interests and objectives be defined at the national level. The reform of Montenegro's defence sector includes a set of restructurings in the areas of planning, financing, organization of the Armed Forces, management and control, as well as building institutions and the necessary infrastructure.

At the time of regaining its independence, there were over 6,000 soldiers situated on Montenegrin territory, while today that number has been significantly reduced to 1,950 members of Armed Forces. Graduating from brigade to battalion, the organization has provided more efficient structure units of the Armed Forces, and adapted a wide range of security challenges and standards of modern armed forces. Bearing in mind that one of the greatest security risks for Montenegro is surplus ordnance in the ware-

houses of the Armed Forces, the number today is significantly lower than in 2006, being reduced from almost 11,000 tons to around 2,112 tons.

In order to stay professional and capable, the Armed Forces of Montenegro have recognized the importance of investing in training. Since 2006, 58 soldiers have completed their education at various prestigious military academies abroad. Currently, there are 28 cadets of the Armed Forces of Montenegro being educated in Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Croatia and the United States.

In 2013, Montenegro conducted a new Strategic Defence Review and is currently developing a long-term development plan for its Armed Forces. These documents will provide a basis for a comprehensive reform of the country's defence system.

Montenegro has committed to participate in the post-transition mission after 2014, which will be non-combat in nature and focus on training, advising, and assisting Afghan National Security Forces under the Resolute Support Mission.

The tireless work and readiness to reform its whole system was rewarded with the official invitation to join NATO, announced on December 2, 2015. At the ministerial meeting in May 2016, NATO members signed the Accession Protocol. Montenegro attended the NATO Summit in Warsaw under the "invitee" status. The ratification of the Protocol on the Accession of Montenegro will be finalized by spring 2017.

The main question is whether the decision on the integration of Montenegro into NATO should be decided in the parliament or decided directly by its citizens in a referendum. However, according to the constitution, parliament is not obligated to organize a referendum on this issue, because Montenegro is not losing sovereignty by joining NATO. Certain groups in Montenegro believe that the government is afraid to call a referendum on the matter. Their main argument is that Montenegrins are highly against the country's further involvement in NATO, but numerous polls state otherwise. According to the latest surveys, 76.6% of the citizens of Montenegro think that the country will become a full member of NATO. There is also

the question of the relationship with Russia and how the accession of Montenegro into NATO will affect it.

Intraregional Security Cooperation – Chances and Impediments

The Balkan Peninsula, more specifically the SEE region, has always been a point of interest for both the East and the West. In the last decade, Montenegro has actively worked on joining the Western family through reforms of its entire system, which had negative impact not only on the relationship between Russia and Montenegro, but also on Russia's relations with countries being already NATO members. According to estimations, this could jeopardize the already vulnerable stability in South East Europe.

However, most of the neighbouring countries of Montenegro, in particular Albania, Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia, appreciate Montenegro's upcoming NATO membership. More distanced or neutral reactions to this issue came from politicians in Serbia and Serbian politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In general, Montenegro's progress in approaching NATO membership is perceived as a positive signal also by the other candidate and aspirant countries to overcome their political hurdles for NATO membership. This applies above all to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. Currently, Kosovo is the only South East European country that is not taking part in any integration into a security-political framework. This unsatisfying situation is contrary to the spirit of cooperative security.

South East Europe is of importance for achieving lasting and overall stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. Therefore, increased cooperation regarding the global security challenges should be a priority with the goal to prevent further spreading of terrorism and radicalization, as well as human trafficking and organized crime. By improving the current bilateral agreements and implementing the right strategies, a safe and secure South East European region can overcome the burden of its history.

Additional efforts should be put on joint action for environmental protection, in particular through systematic exchange of information, bilateral and multilateral agreements and concrete common projects mainly in the border areas. Furthermore, development of cooperation in fields such as human dimension, democratization, justice and the rule of law, inter-ethnic

tolerance, free circulation of ideas and individuals, youth education, programs to eliminate misperceptions and prejudices is essential in order to improve regional cooperation and thus strengthen the stability and security of the South East European region. In order to solve common problems, cooperation is essential, but the real challenge is to establish permanent and effective mechanisms that will be focused on resolving the issues of the South East European region.

International Views on the Security-Political Development in South East Europe

The European Union – despite its crises symptoms – is now the most influential factor in South East Europe due to the fact that the US foreign policy focus turned more to the Middle and Far East. However, we cannot ignore the influence of the US, Russia and Turkey in the region.

While Montenegro's economy has been dependent on Russian investors since the country declared independence from Serbia at the referendum in 2006, it also became politically independent from Moscow. However, the Kremlin refuses to completely lose its influence in the country, and tries to maintain it by supporting those opposing political parties in Montenegro, which have a pronounced pro-Putin and anti-NATO orientation.

Economic investments in the region are sustaining the interest of different subjects whose political influence is on the line. The current important new investments in the Western Balkans come from Azerbaijan, Turkey and Arab countries. Russia and Turkey want to use economic investments to keep or enhance their political influence in the region. But here they are surpassing each other, given the fact that the focus of Turkey is in the Muslim parts of the region which are of minor interest to Russia.

The EU holds the greatest influence in this region, regardless of the historical ties between Western Balkan countries and Russia. The Balkan countries clearly stated their willingness to join the EU, regardless of the difficulties the EU is currently facing.

Summary of Recommendations Regarding Montenegro's Accession to NATO and its Possible Effects on Internal Stability

– The political parties should clarify their standpoints concerning NATO membership of Montenegro and at the same time declare their willingness to accept the subsequent decision of the newly composed parliament concerning the ratification process (referendum or parliament decision), as well as to refrain from mobilizing their followers to demonstrations or violent acts challenging the outcome.[2]

– A part of the political elite avoids taking a stand. These politicians hoped that the voters will give them an answer and help them to determine their positions. Apart from Hungary and Slovenia, all other NATO membership decisions were taken by national parliaments. The government and the opposition should take the decision regarding the referendum as an indication on how to move forward.[3]

– Political leaders and parties should be more open, especially in the period after the elections. Taking a clear position on major political issues should improve the relation with Western partners but also rebuild public trust in institutions.

– Projecting stability is crucial for Montenegro and it also affects the whole region – if Montenegro is stable, it will increase the stability of neighbouring countries as well.

– Combat operations are not mandatory. Every member state can reject or accept to join various operations, just like Germany refused to contribute military forces in Libya.

– A survey study should investigating the perceptions and collective memory related to NATO. This could be useful to gather the key issues and clues in launching an information campaign.[4]

– When it comes to the internal political situation in Montenegro, it is recommended that all political actors should stick to the democratic rules in line with the constitution.

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[2]   This paper was written prior to the Parliamentary elections in Montenegro.
[3]   Not all participants agreed on this matter.
[4]   Not all participants agreed on this matter.

Intraregional Security Cooperation – Chances and Impediments

– NATO and the EU should initiate confidence-building measures between Belgrade and Priština/Prishtina in the area of security.[5]
– Such confidence-building measures could facilitate Kosovo's future participation in the PfP. This would improve the overall security situation in the region, in particular between Serbia and Kosovo.[6]
– The bilateral security situation between Belgrade and Priština/Prishtina should be included by the EU in the agenda of the Belgrade-Priština/Prishtina dialogue.
– In regard to global security challenges there should be more cooperation between the regional intelligence services in fighting against organized crime and terrorism. Establishing a Regional Center of Intelligence could prevent this region from becoming more suitable for the spreading of radical Islam and organized crime.

International Views on Security-Political Development in SEE

– NATO should enhance cooperation with Kosovo by using the instruments of the PfP, i.e. Partnership Action Plan and the Planning and Review Process of the Partnership.[7]
– NATO should enhance its cooperation with Serbia in the scope of PfP, regardless of the fact that Serbia will not become a NATO member in the foreseeable future.
– NATO should take a more pro-active stance towards Greece when it comes to resolving the "name issue" with Macedonia so that this former Yugoslav Republic could become a NATO member as soon as possible and enhance the stability of the region.
– Despite of the current geostrategic rivalry, Russia and NATO should use all opportunities to resume cooperation in the fight against terrorism and other global security challenges, both within the Russia-NATO Council and beyond.
– Despite of its deficiencies, the EU integration process for this part of

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[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

South East Europe will remain the most important vehicle for fostering regional consolidation until further notice. Therefore, pro-active integration policies of the EU as well as a clear orientation on democratic and legal standards by the candidate countries would be necessary.

List of Abbreviations

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
DIB	Defence Institution Building
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
KSF	Kosovo Security Force
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLAT	NATO's Liaison Advisory Team
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PPCI	Process of Planning and Continuous Improvement
PPRD	Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters
RSSEE	Regional Stability in South East Europe
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreements
SAP	Stabilisation and Association Process
SGI	Study Group Information
UN	United Nations
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
US	United States

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Soon after regaining its independence on 21 May 2006, Montenegro decided to take the Euro-Atlantic integration path. The country's recent NATO membership could aid further European integration in the future. In this publication of the 33rd RSSEE SG workshop chances and impediments connected to Montenegro's accession to NATO are presented and related impacts for Montenegro in particular, and for the whole region in general are explained. Power constellations and geopolitical trends that affect security developments in the Western Balkans are analysed from a national and international point of view.

33rd Workshop of the PfP Consortium Study Group
Regional Stability in South East Europe